

## THE LIVING FORCES OF THE GOSPEL



# THE LIVING FORCES OF THE GOSPEL

EXPERIENCES OF A MISSIONARY  
IN ANIMISTIC HEATHENDOM

BY

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## PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

THIS book is a psychological study based upon the author's experience as a missionary among the animistic heathen of the Indian Archipelago. There has been much unanimity among German missionaries as to his conclusions, and the author would take advantage of this translation of his work to appeal to all English speaking missionaries, and those interested in the work and literature of missions, for their criticism and observations. He found that the conversion of heathen in Netherland India was effected by stages ; it would be extremely valuable to him to know whether the experience of missionaries in Africa, in Oceania, in Central America, in India and China are similar to his own. He would like especially to learn the minds of missionaries on the following questions : Whether the first thing in the Gospel that attracts is deliverance from the fear of demons ; whether the sense of sin and the longing for forgiveness is a later growth ; whether Christ is accepted first of all as a Deliverer from the devil, then from the state of fear in which their lives are spent, and last of all as the Saviour from sin ? Are the features of Animism as he has described them in the first part of his book essentially the same among other peoples ? Similar notions of the soul are found in China, Africa, Suriname, even in Greenland, and many other places. It would seem as if Animism were the primitive form of heathenism, maintaining itself, as in China and India to this hour, amid all the refinements of civilisation. The study of Greek and old German Religions exhibit the same animistic features. The essence of heathenism seems to be, not the denial of God but complete estrangement from Him. The existence of God is everywhere known and a certain veneration given Him. But

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He is far away, and is therefore all but ruled out of the religious life. His place is taken by demons, who are feared and worshipped. The author would esteem it a favour were any missionaries to communicate with him (Missionshaus, Barmen, Germany) their experiences and thoughts on any of these matters.

## PREFACE TO THE THIRD GERMAN EDITION

THE favourable reception given to his psychological study of missions strengthens the author's conviction that foreign missions have something to say to the home Church and to theology, which is ever called upon to consider the movements of the times. The essays which appeared in Kählers "Angewandten Dogmen," almost contemporaneously with this book, called upon missionaries to prepare their experiences amid their conflict with heathenism for the use of theologians. The "Living Forces of the Gospel" was quite unconsciously a modest answer to that invitation. It is very gratifying to missionaries to find that theological speculations about missions agree so strikingly with their practical experience. I have observed with increasing surprise and delight how a believing study of the Bible supports the theory and practice of missions, and how the experience of missionaries confirms convictions which such students have already reached. That is a suggestive fact of which I have not been able in this treatise to make any use, but which I may turn to account in a later work.

As my enquiry was breaking fresh ground I was ready to welcome any new facts or criticisms from the experience of my colleagues. However, they have been in essential agreement with me. In this edition I have attended to some minor objections and have changed phrases that were misunderstood. Too little time has elapsed since the appearance of the book to allow colleagues of the mission field to pass any detailed judgment upon it. It is to them mainly that I look for help in dealing with the questions which I have raised.

From another quarter, however, I have been counselled to

give a more thorough and dispassionate study to problems in the history of religion, especially in view of the results in the science of comparative religions, *i.e.* to recognise that the idea of evolution at present ruling the scientific world must also rule in the investigation of religion. I am not so unacquainted with the literature of the subject as my critics suppose. But as I have come to different results it could not lie in the plan of my work to show any agreement with the religious and philosophical presuppositions of those men, for whom I have a high esteem. I had and have no desire for controversy; my object is simply constructive. I described animistic heathenism as concretely as I could. I confined myself strictly to that. I set down facts of my own observation and those of other colleagues. I began with the facts of experience; then I drew inferences from them. If these do not agree with the dominant hypothesis of evolution, that is due to the brutal facts and not to the "religious and historical presuppositions" of the observer. I do not deny that something can be said for the idea of evolution in the religions of mankind, but the study of Animism, with which I have long been familiar as an eyewitness, did not lead me to that idea. Rather the conviction which I arrived at is, that animistic heathenism is not a transition stage to a higher religion. I think I have adduced sufficient facts to establish that, and facts do not vanish away before hypothesis. Let them produce facts to prove that animistic heathenism somewhere and somehow evolved upwards towards a purer knowledge of God, real facts, not imaginary constructions of such an evolution. Any form of Animism known to me has no lines leading to perfection, but only incontestable marks of degeneration.

I have worked as a missionary for many years in intimate contact with thousands of the adherents of animistic heathenism, and I have been convinced that the determining force of that heathenism is hostile to God. I was forced in a hand to hand conflict with it to consider the powers at work therein. Behind the animistic notions which interest the observer are mighty forces; whether these come from above



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or from beneath cannot be decided *a priori*. The missionary comes sooner or later to feel them. And the attitude of heathenism towards the Christian religion, always hostile, suggests that it divines an enemy, not a superior brother. As a matter of fact, Christianity succeeds only when, after much deep ploughing, it has turned up a fresh human soil. The best converts from heathenism are its severest judges.

This stern estimate of heathenism does not forbid the missionary, to whom a thorough knowledge of his people's religion is of the first importance, collecting with care and recognising frankly as of Divine origin whatever it contains of longing for God, of moral feeling, and of desire for better things, nay rather it demands it. I thought I had made that sufficiently plain in my book. But in heathenism the gold of the divine thoughts becomes dross. At best what true thoughts are there are an undercurrent; in no case do they afford a decided religious or slowly ennobling motive. I have not devoted a special chapter to these religious values; I thought they were more likely to be rightly estimated when placed in their proper connection. Who would care, as a missionary among the heathen, to lead a life of conflict, of disappointment and privation, unless he were convinced that the *vox viva evangelii* would be heard even in the most depraved heathen heart, unless he believed that even the Animists because they are ἐκ θεῶν are also εἰς θεόν.

The author's intention was to set the darker powers of heathenism over against the quickening forces of the Gospel. He felt impelled to do so by experiences similar to those which befell those earlier missionaries, who determined to declare to the Church at Antioch, "All that God had done with them and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts xiv. 27; xv. 3, 4, 12). It is written of them: "They caused great joy to all the brethren." To-day as of old the victory is with the Gospel, that Gospel of which the great Apostle to the Gentiles, from a rich experience, testifies that it works οὐκ ἐν λόγῳ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ καὶ πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ (1 Thess. i. 5).



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## INTRODUCTION

It is an historical fact that modern foreign missions have produced and are producing magnificent results, a fact which cannot be gainsaid even by those who have little sympathy with missionaries or mission operations. Protestant Christendom, ever since it began to carry into effect its mission thoughts, has had abundant experience of the *Magnalia Dei* among the heathen. Thousands, nay, millions of heathen in the most diverse stages of civilisation have renounced idolatry and entered into fellowship with the living God. They have turned away from idols with a genuine aversion, have given up the vices of lying and immorality, together with the horrors of bloodshed they were wont to practise, and have learned from their new faith to be truthful and honest, merciful and kind. The Gospel has made them new men, with new thoughts, new feelings, new volitions. Many nominal Christians, some hypocrites here and there, may be found among them, but countless thousands have been truly converted, and have confirmed the reality of their inward change by a corresponding change of life.

Mission work has accomplished even greater things than this; it has gained a notable victory over entire tribes and nations. The Kols, the Karens, the Battaks, the Niassers, the Alfurus of Minahassa, the Waganda, the Basutos, and the tribes of many South Sea Islands, are there to prove that the Gospel is capable of completely transforming whole nations, delivering them from idolatry; it has turned their swords into ploughshares, their rule of might into a law fashioned by Christian principles; it has naturalised humanity and civilisation in their midst. Many a heathen people, accepting the Gospel, has been changed fundamentally.

In view of these results of Protestant foreign missions it

should be a seasonable and profitable task to trace out the effects of the preaching of the Gospel in the mission field, and to enquire what powers are most effective in that preaching for the Christianising of the heathen. Wherever there are visible results the forces that produce them can be observed. What, then, are the forces of the Gospel that are producing results of such importance? The "Gospel," as we call it, is infinitely rich and many-sided, containing a great variety of God's gifts to men; it brings the love of God to a selfish world, all kinds of deliverance to the enslaved, truth to the deluded, wisdom to the foolish, reconciliation with God to the sinner, help to the suffering, a new heart to the unclean; it purifies and ennobles earthly relations; it unites the world with God; it brings to mankind joy, peace, and freedom; it emancipates the enslaved masses and invests the individual with personal responsibility and worth. Which of these various gifts produces those results in the heathen world? Is it the lofty morality of Christianity that conquers the heathen? Is it the majestic personality of the Son of Man or the mystery of the Son of God? Is it Jesus the Reconciler, or the sublime example of the fairest of the sons of men? Is it the spiritual superiority of Christianity, its civilising power, or its promise of deliverance from sin and guilt? Are we to regard one or other of these powers as central, or are we confronted with an inextricable intermingling of the most diverse influences whose roots remain undiscovered? The practice of foreign missionaries has hitherto been to narrate to the heathen the stories of the Old and New Testaments, to instruct them in the law and the promises, to set forth the crucified before their eyes, to commend the Saviour of sinners, to endeavour to awaken the hope of eternal life and to instruct them in the duties of a new life. Which of those diverse incitements contains the vital powers that work so mightily? Do they all work together? Or does the power lie elsewhere in a region perhaps less noticed?

It is worth while following up this question even at the risk of getting a different answer from what we hoped to get.



Mission work can only welcome such investigation in its own interests. Every effect of the Divine word is, no doubt, a mystery which cannot be fully explained by psychology nor divested completely of the wonderful. Force itself, even in the investigations of the physicist, is a mystery, yet we get nearer it by exact observation. And just as in the kingdom of nature we can trace back definite phenomena to definite forces, and reach a more complete and exact description thereof, so in the kingdom of God observation of actual results may help us to a more exact investigation of the forces underlying them. Our question then comes to this: vital powers are imported into and become operative in the heathen world through the preaching of the Gospel; what are those quickening Gospel powers?

Should we succeed in answering this question the gain would not be small. In the first place it would be a gain to the mission worker. The messenger would have a clear idea of what was vital, essential, and indispensable in his message; he would know what he must first communicate to those he is seeking to evangelise. As a wise teacher he must, at first, in his offer of salvation aim at what is central. More than any other worker in the Church he is compelled to put to himself the question: What is the essential element in the Gospel message? Many reasons will constrain the missionary, especially among a primitive people, to begin with an offer of the kernel of the Gospel. A long after-training of the converts, continued even for generations, will be necessary ere they can enter into the fulness of its spiritual wealth. But what is the fundamental truth which the missionary should offer to the heathen to enable them to become genuine Christians before they can acquire a full knowledge of the word of God? The missionary will always act here in accordance with his own personal conception and experience of what is the essence of the Gospel. He may be wrong in his methods; he may even be materially wrong; in that case he exposes himself to the danger of doubting the power of his message. But the more successful mission work becomes, the more legitimate will it be to infer from

what the heathen accept, the manner in which they accept it, and the forces that are set free among them by that acceptance, what is the kernel and power of Christianity which must be emphatically presented as fundamental, and what are its less important elements to be set aside for the time being, even although they should appear to the evangelist to be of the first order of importance.

The missionary will also gain a better understanding of the spiritual life of the heathen and heathen Christians by attending to the effects of his preaching on the souls of his hearers. He will thereby escape the danger of making his own spiritual life, the standard for measuring the progress of his converts, or setting up the course of his own inner development as a law of Christian life, binding even on heathen Christians. He will thus be preserved from carrying on a propaganda rather than a mission, *i.e.* from labelling instead of inwardly renewing his adherents. Immature Christians are prone to imitate the outward forms of Christian life which they observe in their leaders, to speak the language of Canaan, to copy the demeanour of Godliness and thereby to impose upon their pastors. What is real to the preacher may become to them a mere phrase. An understanding of their psychological condition will warn the missionary against desiring to see the little David strutting in Saul's armour, or bringing up Christians against his will, who by hypocritical imitation conceal those defects which can scarcely be overcome at the present stage of their inner life. If he sees clearly the effects of the Gospel on the heathen and on those who are becoming Christians, he will appreciate more accurately the supposed defects of their spiritual life and judge better of their reality. He will learn to wait with greater patience for fruit during the period when the laws of spiritual growth allow nothing to appear save young shoots or rudimentary blossoms; he will be able to judge soberly and lovingly the results of his evangelistic labours and discover with thankfulness germs of life where the uninstructed eye sees nothing. The observer of missions from the outside will, if he takes the trouble to study those

powers in their progressive development, be more just in his judgment than the superficial critic of missions usually is.

The answering of our question might also enrich the Church at home. Custom, with its paralysing and blinding power, has always prevented Christians from seeing what really is central in their faith. To the pampered possessor the great gifts of Christianity easily become unintelligible abstractions and modes of speech. They are inherited, and that conceals the real worth of them. Foreign missions yield manifold gifts to the Christendom that promotes them; they fructify its spiritual life, quicken its various energies, and provide new outlets for Christian love; they help us to understand the ways of God with the nations at a time when Christian Churches, enfeebled by age, have almost entirely forgotten the guidance of their youth; from their most prosperous harvest fields they make clear to the Christian Churches their ever new duties, viz., that of being educators of the nations and not self complacent coteries of the elect. When the home flowers are yielding little, missions gather fresh honey for theology. They may also render service to the home Church by setting forth in large unmistakable letters the quickening powers of the Gospel. Not that Christianity needs to be supported by any apologetic of that sort. But not unfrequently its professors need to be lifted to a higher platform, whence with clear vision they may no longer confound what is incidental and secondary with what is essential, and see great and small in their due proportions. The grandeur of mission work corrects the spiritual perspective of a faithful Church.

But the enquiry is confronted with considerable difficulties, which render the obtaining of a sure answer somewhat doubtful. We must know heathenism exactly as it is before we can rightly appreciate the resistance which it offers to the Gospel. Anyone, therefore, who wishes to observe the effects of the Gospel on the heathen world must have a perfect knowledge of heathenism. To give a true picture of heathenism, however, even although we confine ourselves to a single phase of it, is a very difficult matter. Where shall we find an absolutely reliable account of any heathen

religion? Many observers incline to dwell unduly on its favourable side; others bury in the gloom of the heathen "night" the outline of the picture. The former underestimate the downward drag, and the latter fail to see the distinctive peculiarities of the religion. It is hardly possible for travellers, in their brief sojourn and imperfect knowledge of the people and their language, to get a thorough knowledge of their religion. The shy pagan does not care to have the foreigner prying into his sanctuary. Scholars whose knowledge of heathenism is not obtained from personal observation are in danger of constructing the heathen religion at their study table. And Christian missionaries do not always give the requisite earnest study to the heathenism they wish to overthrow, especially when it is breaking up around them. Often they are blamed, and not always unjustly, for their prejudice and their lack of understanding of heathen religion. Yet in the estimate and description of heathen religions, the rank of crown witnesses must be given to missionaries. Their constant living with the heathen, their exact knowledge of the language, customs, and legal relations, enable them to see into the depths of their religion more clearly than any other Europeans. They offer Christianity, and that compels them to make a thoroughgoing comparative study of heathenism. Their daily observation of the people also enables them to see heathenism as it really is; they witness its abominations and its demoralising powers; they feel its darkness and might as painful realities; they hear the groans of the oppressed; they see the deadly swamp of heathen corruption. And too often they have to experience in their own bodily sufferings and martyrdom the devilish powers of heathenism. But no one is better qualified than they to disinter whatever elements of truth a heathen religion contains, to judge whether it has representations of God and what they are; whether beneath the dark surface any moral and religious powers lie concealed. Their love for the people among whom they labour makes them keen observers, especially of their moral and religious life. Assuming that a missionary is constantly alive to the danger of unduly

emphasising the darker side, a danger to which an evangelist is perhaps more exposed than any other, we may trust him to give a faithful picture of actual heathenism.<sup>1</sup>

There is, of course, a copious missionary literature testifying to the results of the Gospel which has little to say in answer to our question. The missionaries report as to the success of their work or the resistance that it meets. But they rarely turn their attention to psychological facts. Because of their traditionary standpoint, few of them take the trouble to trace the intricate paths along which a heathen heart pushes upwards; they simply rejoice in the fact that the disciple has reached the desired goal. And who would blame men in the midst of a life and death struggle for so doing? We have not many personal testimonies of converted heathen Christians. Very few of those who have found the way to God are capable of such an accurate analysis of their experience as would remove all doubt of its reality.

The world is the mission field to-day; it is impossible to make so wide a region the subject of any exact enquiry; we must take one definite section of it and confine our attention to that. Mission work among the animistic heathen of the Indian Archipelago, where that form of heathenism has few variations, commends itself for such study; it possesses a double advantage. Heathenism in these islands lying between India and Australia has already been thoroughly examined. Mission work has also been carried on with great success widely throughout the whole Archipelago, in Sumatra, Nias, Celebes, Ambon, Halmahera, and has led to the partial formation of national Churches of heathen Christians. Here, then, may be seen visible results among a genuinely heathen people. An exact knowledge of one form of the animistic heathenism of those islands, acquired through personal observation by a missionary who has a scientific interest in religion, coupled with a comparative study of the religion of kindred

<sup>1</sup> I am much gratified at being able to adduce Professor Kahler as a witness in favour of the competence of the much abused missionary. He says: "Our missionaries are the only people in a position to observe genuine heathenism and the effects of the Gospel upon it."

peoples, encourages us to undertake a work planned like the present. Many a glance will be thrown upon the religions of Africa and of other animistic peoples as far as they exhibit similar features. We shall also point out in passing certain characteristic elements which belong to heathenism everywhere. The missionary may also be allowed to base his inquiry on that form of heathenism with which he is most familiar, that of the Battaks of Sumatra. This may be taken as a type of the Indonesian religions, which it is fitted to be, because of the surprisingly uniform character of those religions. The experiences of missions amid this form of heathenism may perhaps encourage those who are familiar with heathen religions of a higher type to undertake a similar inquiry.

It will be necessary to add to one's own experience and observation those of other mission workers within the prescribed region, either to confirm or to correct the results obtained. Hence numerous quotations, more or less detailed, are unavoidable. At the same time, in the interests of truth, we can only use such as stand the test of serious criticism. All anecdotal of doubtful value is, of course, ruled out. Men who are both critics and workers guarantee the reliability of our authorities. A great part of the material quoted is taken from Warneck's "Allg. Missionszeitschrift," the critical sobriety of which has done much to secure for missions a place among the sciences. The reports of the Rhine Missionary Society, and those Holland authorities which are mainly adduced, may be taken as absolutely trustworthy. The same is true of the "Basler Missionstudien," of the literature of the "East African Mission," of the "Moravian Brethren," and others. A sober view of one's own mission work sharpens the eye for the real in the accounts of other fellow-workers. A work like the present runs a greater risk of giving offence to many by its moderation, than of incurring the reproach of uncritical bias.

To get a clear insight into the Divine powers of the Gospel, we must take into account its entire surroundings as it enters into the heathen world. We must begin with an

account, as faithful as possible, of the social, moral, and religious practices of animistic heathenism, basing it upon the Battak religion, its worship of gods, spirits, and souls. We shall then endeavour to comprehend the complicated religious beliefs and the characteristic features of the motley cultus in order to estimate aright the nature and power of animistic heathenism. This will be necessary towards helping us afterwards to trace the counter working powers of the Gospel. But before considering these in detail the two opponents, heathenism and the Gospel, must be confronted with each other. What is the attitude of heathenism towards Christianity when first brought into contact with it? What are the attracting and repelling powers they severally display? We need to have as exhaustive an estimate as possible of the natural factors which come into operation as allies of heathenism or of the Gospel, to hinder or further, to open up the way or block it. Psychological processes are complicated. But we must not shrink from the trouble of laying bare the entangled roots of the natural causal connection. We shall then be in a better position to gain a clear view of the powers that transcend human explanations, and to see how they, partly resting on those surrounding natural factors, partly working against them, reveal the action of the living God. These somewhat minute preliminary investigations will enable us to approach the question with some prospect of success: What are the living forces of the Gospel which tell upon the heart of the heathen and upon those who are becoming Christian, and how do they act?





# ANIMISTIC HEATHENISM

## A. BATTAK HEATHENISM<sup>1</sup>

ANYONE carefully observing the religion of the inhabitants of the Indian Archipelago and its effects upon their daily life, will be forced to admit that these heathen are very religious. Their habits and customs, their laws and their morals, their social and family life, have all a religious' foundation. Religion seems to be the determining power both of the national and the individual life, and it is in their religion that we must seek the roots of their thoughts and the motives of their action.<sup>2</sup> This would indeed give them a superiority over many so-called Christian nations, if the reference to God or gods constituted the essence of heathen religiousness. No doubt gods are known, their names occasionally mentioned, and myths about them recounted; but the gods are of secondary importance for religious feeling. The central fact of the Indonesian religions is a feeling of dependence, amounting to fear, not of the Deity, but of sinister powers, spirits, and souls. It is fear of these powers which alone impels those heathen to seek ways and means of averting their pernicious influence. The gods are really powerless and apathetic spectators of this conflict, and therefore no one gives himself any trouble about them.

If you ask an intelligent Battak about the gods of his people, he will mention three names: Batara Guru, Soripada, and

<sup>1</sup> For the following account of Battak heathenism, cf. J. Warneck, "Die Religion der Battak."

<sup>2</sup> In a prize essay which I prescribed for Battak teachers on the theme: Were the heathen Battaks really seeking God? it was shown that the whole life of the heathen, not only in its highest moments, but in its daily ramifications, was related to religion. The same impression is given by Spieth's book on the Ewe-tribes.

Mangalabulan, with whom are associated two others, Ompu Tuhan Mula djadi and Debata Asiasi. The first three, usually called "the three gods," did not originally belong to Battak heathenism, but were forced on the Battaks, as on many other peoples of the Indian Archipelago, by the Hindus in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when they ruled part of the great Sunda Islands.<sup>1</sup> In them we find again the Indian Trimurti. The real supreme god of the Battaks is Ompu Tuhan Mula djadi, whose name signifies source of creation, and who is now curiously thrust into the background. To-day Batara Guru (teacher) is, in the consciousness of the people, the supreme deity. The three Indian gods were made sons of the supreme god of the Battaks, and were thus assimilated into the national faith.<sup>2</sup> Batara Guru is to-day worshipped as the preserver of the world, with whom men have chiefly to do. He is called Batara Guru, the god whom one obeys, whom one consults, on whom one depends, from whom one enquires the law, on whom the laws of earth depend. To him Ompu Tuhan Mula djadi has resigned his government of the world,<sup>3</sup> so that he has become the most popular of the five. After him in importance comes Soripada, the god who grants to his worshippers the blessing of children. The evil principle that works in opposition both to gods and men is Mangalabulan, who is therefore invoked in prayers which are the outcome of fear. Asiasi, who is seldom mentioned, means compassion. Practically, the dis-

<sup>1</sup> The Hindus had then established a mighty kingdom on Java (Modjopahit), whence they influenced the coasts of Sumatra, and in a peaceful way imparted to the Battaks some elements of culture, besides fragments of their religion and language.

<sup>2</sup> It is said in a Battak legend that those three gods sprang from a great egg, which was hatched by a fabulous butterfly, and that Mula djadi gave them wives. This myth shows how the popular consciousness endeavoured to balance accounts with the gods imported by the Hindus. Another tradition says that Mula djadi himself created those three gods, and assigned to them a dwelling-place in heaven. That leaves Mula djadi supreme, but lessens the honours he receives. But it is really only an exchange of names.

<sup>3</sup> Yet he also troubles himself very little about his human children; it is said in a Battak story: Batara Guru, after being once called down to men by his messenger the swallow, declared it was too much for him, and that in future he should be left in place.

tinctions among these five are of little importance; in the consciousness of the people they are all jumbled together. The ordinary man can give no explanation whatever either of the names or of the functions of the gods. These deities have really nothing to do with those of the Indian conquerors. Their persons are taken up into the Battak Pantheon and refashioned in accordance with Battak ideas.

As the Battaks recognise Guru or Mula djadi as the highest deity, before whom the other gods recede into the background, so we find among all the peoples of the Indian Archipelago one Supreme Deity. Among the Malays, such is Batara; among the Dayaks, Mahatara; in Serawak, Betara; in Buru, Lahatala; among the Olongadju on Borneo, Hatalla; in Siau, Duwata; among the Javanese, Dewata or Djawata; on Nias, Lowalangi; in Halmahera, Djohumadihutu; among the Toradja in Celebes, Jlai (man), etc.

The Battaks, like many Indian peoples, imagine three worlds, one above the other. The upper world, with seven stories, is the seat of the gods, the middle world the abode of men, and the under world the home of spirits and of demons. The life of the gods is like that of men; they have wives and children, slaves and cattle; they play, wage war, carry on lawsuits, etc. Human souls are sent down from a kind of pre-existence in the upper world to the middle world of earth. Men are called "gods in the midst," i.e. the middle world.

Ompu Tuhan Mula djadi is regarded as the creator. That is what the name itself means. They say of him: he flattens the skull, twines the bowels, sets agoing the heart, expands the liver, opens the mouth, makes clear the eyes of the sons of men. That is a recognition of him as man's creator, yet in the consciousness of the people, and in spite of myths, that belief falls into the background. There are also legends current which represent man as born now from an egg hatched by a fabulous fowl, now from a mushroom, and now from an animal. On other Indian islands, man is supposed to have sprung from a woman who came down from heaven and was impregnated by the wind, or again the first man grew out of the earth, or on trees, or on a bamboo.

The general belief in the Eastern Islands of the Archipelago is that men have sprung from nature, while that of the myth-forming Western Islands is that they came into being through a creative act of God. This latter conception underlies the nature myth that the sun as male principle enters into union with the earth as female principle, and from that union man proceeds.<sup>1</sup> Other Indian peoples declare that God formed the first human pair out of stone and that the wind breathed life into the stone image (Toradja), some say again that God made the first man of earth (Halmahera).

There exists a long Battak narrative about the creation of the world. Si Boru parudjar, daughter of Ompu Tuhan Mula djadi, was one day in company with her younger sister winding yarn in the upper world. The yarn was soon finished, but the ball of the elder despite her efforts grew no larger than an egg. In her vexation she let it fall; it fell down to the middle world, which already existed in a state of mud; she held still the end of the thread in her hand. Down this thread she herself slid to the middle world, where all trace of her was lost in the mud and water. In her distress she sent the swallow Mandi and a beetle (messengers of God) to her father praying him to send her a handful of earth. This she spread out upon the water, thereby creating the earth, and there she took up her abode. Then came Naga Padoha, a fabulous Dragon, and destroyed the newly-created earth. The heavenly virgin created the earth a second time, and a second time the Dragon destroyed it. At her request her father caused the earth to be dried up; she then found the Dragon and outwitted him. Under pretence of clothing him with ornaments she secretly bound him so that he could no longer move. Once more she created a new earth which subsisted. According to another variation she thrust a sword, up to the hilt, into the body of the fettered Dragon. When he sometimes rolls himself about he produces

<sup>1</sup> We come upon the same notion among the Ewe. The masculine sun marries the female earth (Spieth). The earth is called "Our Mother." She is the heavenly maid, who in union with heaven has begotten men, beasts, and plants, nay even the gods of earth (Kruyt, "Animisme," p. 68).

an earthquake and men cry *suhul* (i.e. swordgripe), that they may remind him of his captivity and helplessness.<sup>1</sup>

The creation legend is transmitted in another form in the southern province Angkola. *Batara Guru*,<sup>2</sup> they say, once went down into a chasm and there, on the horns of a buck which he had taken with him, built a raft; on this he spread out the earth. He caused trees to grow for the ravens and swallows, who were the first inhabitants of earth, then he created the sun and moon; finally, he created men out of earth which had been brought from the upper world. These men he animated through magic formulas and gifted them with speech.

Of the five chief gods there are neither pictures nor symbols. They are worshipped neither in temples nor in holy places. They do not even traffic with men through any media. Men have little to do with them, and their names are only met with in myths and prayers. More important for religious feeling, because nearer to men, are the deities of second rank, inferior gods, who are not of human origin, such as ancestors, who are yet mainly worshipped though not dependent on the chief gods. They are more feared than the gods who are far off in heaven; and they are more needed in the village and in the field. Hence the first place is always given them in the sacrificial prayers. Several of them are worshipped through media or symbols, either animals or images. In them are embodied powers of nature which bear more directly upon the welfare of men than those nebulous gods. Such is the *Debata idup*, a masculine and a feminine deity; in whom is worshipped the power of generation. This deity confers the blessing of children, the lack of which is felt by uncivilised man to be the greatest misfortune. He is worshipped in the form of two wooden images, one masculine the other feminine, and these symbols are carried round the house on the backs of the married pair while entreat-

<sup>1</sup> The Niassers have a similar legend about the genesis of the earth (Sundermann, "Die Insel Nias").

<sup>2</sup> In this province, which is more subject to Malay influence, it is significant that the creator of the world is not *Mula djadi* but *Batara Guru*.

ing the blessing of children. Baras pati in tano is a kindly earth god, in whom is personified the fruitful power of the earth. The maturing of the fruits of the field is of the greatest importance to an agricultural people ; consequently this deity is more feared and worshipped than all the heavenly gods put together. He is the first to be invoked in all sacrificial prayers. He is conceived as dwelling on the earth, and is seen embodied in the house lizard whose image is very often found in houses. Boru Saniang Naga is a female water spirit, in whom is worshipped both the beneficent and the destructive powers of water. Boru na Mara is a spirit of the air who causes disease. The worship of such semi-deities is met with everywhere in Indonesia. The powers of nature that are worshipped in them are thought of as independent of the Creator of the world, whose power does not extend to the matter or forces of the world. The water deities, the Saniang or Sangiang, are specially popular on many islands of the Archipelago. That is not surprising among islanders, who are so often in peril of water and who yet owe to water the greater part of their means of living. In addition to these there are innumerable local deities who owe their origin to the fear of volcanoes, whirlpools, water falls, and such strange and impressive phenomena of nature. There is no precise distinction between these local nature deities and the ancestors who are supposed to dwell in such places. There is also a worship of the beneficent and the destructive powers of nature alongside the worship of the Creator, but with no inner connection between them. The significance of the Creator for religious feeling has fallen into the background. The mysterious powers of nature are more considered because more feared. Their worship narrows the religious horizon. To the Animist what threatens most danger demands most careful service and propitiation.

An example of the way in which myths originate through fear of uncomprehended natural phenomena is given by a legend current among the Battaks on Samosir, which seeks to explain the eclipse of the sun and moon. In the remote olden times the sun had seven sons, all of whom scorched the

earth as hotly as their mother. Men could not endure their heat, and in their distress sent the swallow to the moon, beseeching him to come and help them. The moon agreed to do so, but required of men a promise that they would come to his help against the sun if she should turn in enmity against him. Thereupon the moon seized all his children (the stars) and concealed them. He demanded of men a great quantity of betel leaves, of lime, and all other material of siri-chewing; he chewed these all up, and collected the blood-red juice in seven large bowls. Then he called to the sun and said: I have slain and eaten all my children, do you kill and slay yours also. In proof of his statement he showed the seven bowls, the red contents of which looked like blood. The sun agreed, caught her seven sons, slew and ate them. But the moon afterwards set his children, the stars, at liberty. The sun saw that she had been deceived, and waged war on the moon; she gathered hired warriors, spirits of the air called lau, and sent them against the moon. An eclipse of the moon meant that the sun's warriors were pressing the moon hardly. Then men were under obligation to help the moon by crying with all their might: Set the moon at liberty again, you warriors of the sun. Conversely an eclipse of the sun takes place when the moon's warriors, who were called laha, violently assailed the sun.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that one root of the Battak religion, and that the weakest, is its relation to mythological deities. A second root, the most vigorous of all, is the fear produced by the secret uncomprehended powers of nature. There is a third, very delicate and very difficult to discover, though deeply imbedded in the soul of the people. The eye, searching in the darkness, perceives the outline of a thought of some

<sup>1</sup> This marvellous myth is also found among other peoples. Krunt speaks of a similar legend in mid-Celebes. Sundermann likewise says that the Niassers speak of the sun having slain her children. It is striking to come upon the same legend in the Ewe tribes in Togo, though without any reference to the eclipse of the moon. The Santals in India have also a similar myth. The woman "the moon" persuades the man "the sun" to eat up his sons, the day stars, by maintaining that she had already eaten up her daughters, the night stars. Because of this deception the sun is to this hour enraged against the moon, and pursues her through the heavens.

omnipotent power reigning over all those deities. Among the Battaks this is reflected in the general name Debata, *i.e.* god. He is called simply god, also lord and grandfather. The idea which is here come upon of a supreme God is very vague, and is always in conflict with animistic feeling. All these chief gods and all great chiefs are called Debata. Great chiefs are to their subjects the highest beings, because they are most to be feared.<sup>1</sup> Everything wonderful and worthy of veneration—ancestors, distinguished men, wild beasts, striking objects of a higher civilisation—is called grandfather. The myths about the deities are not all the common possession of the people, but however dim the notions about them are, the heathen Battak divines in the Debata the Lord who reigns over the universe in general and over man in particular. To Him men turn instinctively in special distress. One often hears in daily life expressions such as “everything depends on God,” “we are in God’s hands,” “that depends on God,” “as God grants,” “God is gracious.” There are beautiful proverbs about God—“a drop of dew with God’s blessing makes a feast,” “what God does man must not change,” “God rises and looks down upon those who suffer wrong,” “do not follow crooked ways for riches come from God,” “God is a righteous Judge,” “wherever we sit God is present.” God, not Mula djadi or any other god of mythology, is at least divined in the popular consciousness as the requiter and guardian of right.<sup>2</sup> Hence the oath, which appeals to God the Judge, is held sacred, and judgments of God are a dreaded *ultima ratio* in the administration of justice. The suspected criminal, for example, is allowed to grasp the red hot iron or dart it at another. Even war is conceived as

<sup>1</sup> In Purba, on the Sea of Toba, the heathen asked a Battak evangelist: “Is there really then a Debata besides Tuan Purba,” the head chief. The heathen of Uluan said to Bruch the missionary when he preached to them about God, “Thou art our Debata.” The Basuto chief Maleo declared to Grutzner, the missionary: “Who is God, I am God.”

<sup>2</sup> The Niassers also have beautiful proverbs about God. They call Him the requiter of good and evil, “it rests with God,” “God kills and makes alive,” “God is only a handbreadth above us.” For all that they have no fear of God, for Lowalangi is a good spirit whom we do not need to bring into a friendly mood by sacrifice. Fear alone impels to worship.



a judgment of God. The side which has one slain first is shown by God's judgment to be in the wrong.<sup>1</sup> Hence at the beginning of every battle the warriors pray to God that He would help the righteous cause to conquer.

The above-named deities have no relation whatever to morality. They are not thought of in those moral sayings and legal actions. No Battak, of course, can explain why, in many situations of life, he passes over Batara Guru and the other gods, and feels that he is related to the Debata. That can only be explained by assuming that there is in the popular consciousness the remains of a purer idea of God, alongside and above the recognition of a plurality of gods, a view also that cannot be derived from those. Belief in God had been reduced, by nature worship, fear of spirits and moral coarseness, to a state in which it was no longer recognizable. The host of spirits, born of fear, thrust themselves between God and man, and left behind that faded image of God, which still throws a faint shadow on the feelings of the people, but not on its thought, which is therefore so full of contradictions. Without that assumption we are in presence of an enigma. Whence comes the idea of a supreme Deity exalted above all which is no longer understood by the heathen of to-day, and which has become a mere phrase on their lips? It cannot have been distilled from the motley jumble of the worship of gods and of nature, for it exists alongside of it, and that not in the form of a thought victoriously carried out, but in direct opposition to it. In all the religions of the Indian Archipelago, and probably also of Africa, we meet with the idea of god as of a dimly felt highest court of appeal, enthroned above all the gods that are known and named.<sup>2</sup> He is, not worshipped; He is

<sup>1</sup> We find this appeal to the judgment of God even among the Toradja on Celebes. "The aim of the judgment of God is to let a matter be determined by the gods." Each party is asked to thrust a lance into the earth, and that party whose spear goes deepest has won. In this case the earth deity decides. Or they dive under water, and the one who remains longest under water has a just cause. Here the water deities decide.

<sup>2</sup> Livingstone has somewhere said, There is no need to speak of the existence of God, or of a future life, even among the lowest tribes, for these are generally accepted truths among them.

scarcely even feared ; He is so little known that nothing can be said about Him, save that one occasionally flees to Him.<sup>2</sup> He is really in contradiction with the form in which those heathen religions appear to-day. The realities of animistic heathenism to-day are Polytheism and worship of spirits, together with the fear and magic which accompany them.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, though painted over with colours of the loudest tints, the delicate outline of the original picture has not been entirely effaced.

The idea of God is dimly preserved ; the worship of God is almost entirely lost. A man stands in no relation to the far-off gods, and needs not to fear them. Consequently he has no interest in having any communication with them ; he has little sense of dependence on the gods, but always feels that he is dependent on the spirits of the dead (as will be shown further on). The common man hardly knows the names of the gods.<sup>2</sup> These names are of course invoked in the sacrificial prayers, but only in union with the lower demons and ancestors. The spirits are always the first to be invoked. The heathen are afraid to pass over a deity in their formulas of prayer and therefore heap name upon name. Prayer with them is not a question of Divine worship freely offered, but a necessary means of averting a calamity. The angry deity must be appeased, his jealousy averted, his ill will set aside.<sup>3</sup> The Battak christians use a word for prayer different from that of the heathen, knowing well that the magical formulas of the heathen cannot be called prayer. Such a prayer will run somewhat as follows : O, grandfather Boras pati ni tano, who dwellest in our village, help us

<sup>1</sup> Sundermann testifies of the Niasers : " They know of a Supreme Being, and frequently name Him. But though His name is constantly on their lips, and the highest power is ascribed to Him, there is hardly any real veneration or worship " (Sundermann, " Nias," p. 59).

<sup>2</sup> " A Toradja is perfectly alive to the idea of the soul-stuff. But if asked about his gods and spirits he may repeat something he has casually heard, but will generally refer the questioner to his priest " (Kruyt).

<sup>3</sup> The heathen (the Hindu) does not pray to him in the usual sense of the word, but attempts to conjure or constrain him, to negotiate with him, or to flatter him.

in front and defend us behind.<sup>1</sup> Grandfathers, you three gods in the uppermost heights in the highest heaven, on the rolling stone supplied with steps. Come down, grandfather, from the perforated wood, from the upper gods to the lower (= men). Hear us, Grandfather Boras pati ni tano. Grandfather Batara Guru, Batara Guru whom we obey, Batara Guru whom we consult, Batara Guru on whom we all depend. Here, grandfather, is your sacrifice, a horse, a fish, a siri. Be at one with our grandfather Soripada, Sori the blameless, Sori whom we consult, Sori on whom we depend. Here is your sacrifice, a horse, a fish, a siri. Be at one with our grandfather Mangalabulan, who is great at the beginning and great at the end. Here is your sacrifice. . . . Be at one with our grandfather Mula djadi, the great one; overshadow us, grandfather, protect us, thou who art the origin of things created, who flattenest the skull, openest the ear, settest agoing the heart, expandest the liver, and dividest the fingers from each other. O, god Asiasi<sup>2</sup>, who hast sent us into the world, have compassion on us. O, grandfathers, and all ye who are worthy of veneration (secondary gods and ancestors), ye who are round about on the mountains and the clouds. Here are your sacrifices. . . . O, Mother Boru na mora, Boru Saniangnaga, here are your sacrifices, etc. The following prayer shows the things that are prayed for :<sup>3</sup>—

Be at one with our grandfather the great god,  
 Who creates the body, flattens the breast,  
 Fixes the heart, gives strength to the calf of the leg,  
 Makes the head round and the eye clear,  
 Who makes the ear to hear. Thine ear hears,  
 Thine eye is clear. To guard and keep us, so that we are healthy  
 and well. Grant us sons who shall be warlike,  
 Men of counsel and champions.  
 Grant us daughters who can cook a great pot,  
 Who are clever at weaving.

<sup>1</sup> The power of earth as most important to man is first invoked, not the chief gods.

<sup>2</sup> The god Asiasi is mentioned only incidentally in the prayer formulas, and no one can tell anything about him.

<sup>3</sup> Spieth says of the Ewe negroes that they offer sacrifices, and pray to God directly, but still more do they pray to their ancestors.

## 38 THE LIVING FORCES OF THE GOSPEL

The stars are numerous, the clouds gather into balls,  
So let our sons be numerous and our daughters multiply.

Prayers are offered for the growth of the crops and for the stock of cattle, for health and victory, and numerous descendants. Animistic heathenism knows nothing of prayer as a free outpouring of the heart.<sup>1</sup> Only certain persons, such as priests and chiefs, can commit to memory the traditional formulas. The chief gods are never invoked in the prayers alone, but always in connection with and after the semi-deities. The existence of such nobly-sounding prayers must not lead us to infer that the heathen have intercourse with God, and pour out their hearts to Him. For the prayers are not in the first instance directed to Him, but to the ancestors and earth spirit who are most feared. They are vain repetitions of fixed formulas with which the ordinary sacrifices are presented. They are only uttered at great festivals of the tribe, or in cases of misfortune. While the worship of spirits, which we shall describe later, is familiar in its minutest ramification to every one, the worship of the gods is a matter for the priests or the tribal chiefs. Intercourse with the gods is thrown on them, because they alone have the necessary knowledge. The same thing is seen everywhere in the Indian Archipelago.<sup>2</sup>

Sacrifice is but rarely offered to the gods. The animal mostly sacrificed is the white horse. It is either solemnly slaughtered in presence of the whole tribe, in which case the blood is regarded as an offering, or it is devoted to God, and

<sup>1</sup> A heathen priest once told me that he prayed daily for his son, who was in Padang, that God would be with him. But when I mentioned this to the christians and catechumens, and asked them if that was formerly the custom, they said it was not; and if the statement of the priest was true his prayers were to be ascribed to the influence of the gospel which he has heard here.

<sup>2</sup> Man is not familiar with them (the gods) because their nature is entirely different from his, and inconceivable to him. He cannot therefore simply address or invoke them. He must know the way in which they are to be approached. Thus originated the need for priests and priestesses as intermediaries between spirits and men. These priests must have a highly-developed doctrine of the gods, so that we now know an entire system of gods and spirits among uncivilised men (Kruyt, "Animisme," p. 462).

then allowed to live, but it must not be sold. This function of dedication is performed by the sacrificing priest.

The heathen in certain circumstances do not shrink from deceiving the gods. They offer an egg, declaring to the deity that they are giving him a white buffalo.<sup>1</sup> "Toradjas and Minahassers end the day by an imitated crowing in order to mislead the gods with regard to the duration of a sacrificial festival." The Battaks, when they cross the sea and pass the dwelling-place of any deity, call upon him, assuring him that the buffalo which they have in the boat is only a goat.<sup>2</sup> They are not even ashamed to curse God when things do not go according to their mind. Many old legends state that men declared war against God and bombarded Him from a mountain.

They believe that in earlier and better days there was more intercourse between gods and men. Heaven was then nearer earth, and the gods could be reached from a gigantic rock in the province of Angkola, till men maliciously destroyed it. Many legends tell how the sons of men found the way into heaven, and had communion with the Supreme God, and how daughters of the gods came down to earth and contracted marriages with men. According to another narrative (for every province has a different tradition) God was indignant because men had ceased to worship Him, and earth stank in His nostrils. He destroyed Mount Tinggir radja, which had hitherto enabled men to reach the gods, and removed heaven far away from earth so that all intercourse between God and men ceased. Such legends presuppose a dim remembrance of happier days when men were nearer God.

Belief in and worship of God and the gods, as above described, falls into the background, in the religious life of the Battaks, and of all other inhabitants of the Indian Archipelago. They touch the merest fringe of their religious life.

<sup>1</sup> They act conversely towards men from courtesy. They present a fat pig for their entertainment, and say it is only a little chicken.

<sup>2</sup> The Niassers act similarly. Instead of the dog that is due they sometimes offer its ears, its tail and hair, which are buried instead of the animal. The dog is at the same time led through the grave.

The little that one can learn about them from inquiry is esoteric wisdom, and has little influence on the life of the people. The borderland and central ground is filled by something else, the fear of lower demons and of spirits of the dead, out of which fear springs superstition and ancestor worship. To understand aright this spirit worship, which puts forth the most wonderful blossoms, we must first make ourselves acquainted with the soil out of which it springs up a luxuriant weed. The soil is Animism, that conception of life, so strange to us, which places the soul, the soul-power, the life-stuff, in the centre of religious interest.

We take the word Animism in the widest sense in which it is used by the modern science of religion, as indicating that view of the world which, on the basis of primitive notions of the soul, leads partly to animalism, partly to anthropism (worship of the dead, ancestor worship, spiritism), and belief in demons. Wherever spirits are worshipped, Animism is found to be the presupposition of spiritism. The Battak people have got beyond the primitive stage of Animism, though they plainly exhibit all its characteristic features. Animism is in some sort the philosophy of the uncivilised man, in virtue of which he constructs for himself a picture of the world so far as he has an interest in it. It is occupied with the soul of the living man as well as with the souls of all living creatures, organisms, and even lifeless objects, to which it likewise ascribes a soul, or to speak more correctly soul-stuff. This soul-stuff then becomes the object of worship. From a universal soul, an indestructible store of life, living souls flow to men, animals, plants, metals, instruments, houses, etc. Whatever participates in this life-stuff is valuable and desirable. The vital question for the Animist is how to place his own soul in relation to the souls surrounding him, and to their powers, which are partly injurious and partly useful, with as little danger to himself and as much advantage to himself as possible. What must I do to protect and enrich my soul? That is the cardinal question of the animistic catechism. Animism is the key to an understanding of ancestor worship, and all that is

commonly called heathen superstition. An exact acquaintance with it is indispensable to an understanding of heathenism, because it is found all over the earth, and seems to be the foundation of spirit worship everywhere, and not only among the peoples of the Indian Archipelago.<sup>1</sup> We find traces of it in almost every region of the earth, and every student of religion must reckon with it. The study of Animism gives a surprising insight into the inner life and thought of primitive peoples. With all its strangeness this exotic world of ideas proves that even the "savage" thinks, and feels the need of a reasoned view of the world.

To the Animist the "soul" is something entirely different from what we understand it to be. It is an elixir of life, a life-stuff, which is found everywhere in nature. Man has two souls, one of which, the bodily soul, pertains to him during his life-time. It is a power outside himself conditioning his earthly wellbeing, but does not essentially belong to his person; at death it returns to the animistic storehouse. The other soul, the shadow soul, emerges only when the man dies. It is the shadowy continuation of his person, the part of his individuality that continues to live. The soul of the living man is conceived as a kind of life-stuff, indestructible and animating alternately this man and that.<sup>2</sup> Among peoples of a lower grade the soul-stuff is conceived impersonally as a vital power which at the death of its present possessor, passes over to something else, man, animal, or plant. Higher developed peoples conceive the soul as a refined body, to some extent an *alter ego*, a kind of man within the man. But this soul never coincides with his person, but remains outside his consciousness. It is handed

<sup>1</sup> The missionary, A. C. Kruyt, has given a thoroughly scientific account of Animism in the Indian Archipelago, the study of which cannot be too highly commended to all who are interested in the subject ("Het animisme in den Indischen Archipel").

<sup>2</sup> Even the pantheistic Hindu has a materialistic conception of the soul. There is always a kind of spiritual body corresponding to the material one. The I. does not belong to the soul, but is an attribute of the bodily life, a materialistic product. There is no organic connection between the pantheistically coloured soul and the materialistically determined individual. That corporealises the personal consciousness.

over to man at his conception from the loan office of nature. But it is so independent and incalculable a thing that it may at any moment leave him for a longer or a shorter period, as for example in dreams, or when it is frightened, or when it thinks itself insulted.

The well-being of the man depends upon its moods. It can be nourished, strengthened, and augmented : it can also be weakened, diminished, and enticed away.

This idea of the soul as an independent power, in and beside the man, is met with among many peoples in all parts of the earth. We find it everywhere in the Indian Archipelago, among the Kols, the Karens, and elsewhere in the remote parts of India, in Oceania and Africa, and among the Bush negroes of Suriname.<sup>1</sup>

The following pages will furnish numerous proofs of the world-wide sway of Animism. It is extremely instructive to trace its diffusion in the way Wundt has done in his "Psychology of Peoples." Many a wrong conception of religious and social usage is thereby corrected, and many an obscure custom set in its true light. Wundt discloses the continuity of animistic usages all over the earth so far as that can be done with the material at present available. It is unquestionably a universal law of religion and of psychology that primitive notions of the soul persist most tenaciously. Even in the higher religions, and in the heathenism that exists in Christendom, we find numerous usages of animistic origin. Buddhism, Confucianism, and Mohammedanism have nowhere conquered this most tenacious of all forms of religion ; they have not even entered into conflict with it ; it is only overcome by faith in Jesus Christ.

The soul pervades the whole body, all the members of which are sharers of the soul-stuff, and therefore have a life of their own, a feeling of their own, and a will of their own.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the works of Sundermann and Lett on Nias ; Jellinghaus and Rottrot on the Kols and Santals ; Kruyt, Adriani, and Coolsma on Netherland India ; Doring on East Africa ; Merensky on South Africa ; Irle on the Hereros ; Spieth on the Ewe ; Eppler on Madagascar and the Karens ; Kunze on New Guinea ; Rosler on the Shambala ; Schneider on Suriname ; Wundt, "Volkerpsychologie," Band II., etc.



It is not the man who sees and hears and walks and breathes, but the eye sees, the ear hears, the foot walks, and the mouth breathes. It is not the man who feels pain, but the part of the body where the pain is located. If the soul-stuff is removed from a member it feels pain and becomes ill.<sup>1</sup> In man and beast this soul-stuff is found specially abundant in the head. Hence, in the division of food, the head of the slaughtered animal is always allotted to the chief. Head-hunting has its root in this idea. The vital power and courage of the dead man is appropriated by him who possesses his skull.<sup>2</sup> Medicine and magic are made out of human heads. The soul power is also found concentrated in the intestines, in the liver, and, therefore, in sacrifice the liver of the animal is offered.<sup>3</sup> In India the liver is regarded as the seat of feeling. They say, "my liver is in good condition," that is, I am in a pleasant state of feeling, or "my liver is hot," that is, my wrath is rising, etc. There is much soul-stuff in the blood, for life ebbs away with the blood. Hence, in the sacrifices that are offered to God, blood is an element. It is smeared on the beams of a house that is to be consecrated, that happiness and vital power may dwell there. If any one obtains some of another's blood, he thereby gains power over him. Strength is imparted by drinking the blood of the slain foe.<sup>4</sup> In Nias the carved images of ancestors are smeared with

<sup>1</sup> The Mentawey islanders say, The Regat has gone from the part of the body that is pained.

<sup>2</sup> Head-hunting is found, for example, on Nias, Celebes, Borneo, among the Papuans, formerly, probably, in the whole Indian Archipelago. On Solomon Islands and also among the original inhabitants of Formosa, who hunt for Chinese heads. Dr Adriani explains that head-snatching among the Toradja on Celebes was once a human sacrifice to the dead lest they should drag a member of the tribe to the kingdom of the dead. But in bringing home the skull of an enemy one also brings long life, health, and healing of disease, to his own tribe. For the same reason in Borneo and Sumatra human skulls are buried under the posts of a house at its erection. On Mentawey a man must be slain at the building of a house. Among the Basutos the village is protected from spirits by burying a human head beneath the door-posts. Among many peoples also a fresh human head is put under the foundations of a bridge.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the offering of entrails among the ancients.

<sup>4</sup> Kruyt, "Animisme," p. 56 f.

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blood, which gives soul to the dead wood. Soul-stuff is ascribed to the placenta. There is a mysterious connection between it and the child, its "elder brother," all through life. Its function, after being solemnly buried, is to warn men in certain circumstances of impending evil. It is largely used as a charm. The decayed piece of umbilical cord is carefully preserved. The hair also contains much soul power, and is therefore not cut by the heathen.<sup>1</sup> A mother rubs her sick child with her hair (hair magic, Nias). The Toradja nail hairy human scalps to the cocoanut trees, in order to make them fruitful by their soul power.<sup>2</sup> Hair is used as medicine. Betrothed couples exchange part of their hair in order to add power to each other's soul. All hair cut off is hidden or buried by its owner to prevent its getting into the hands of an enemy, who might, by burning it, seriously imperil his life. For there is a bodily connection between a man and the hair, as well as any other portions or secretions of his body that he has parted with. Much uncanny sorcery is based on this animistic notion. It is supposed that you can injure the whole man by getting into your power an animated part of his body.

The nails also are regarded as a seat of soul-stuff. Hair and nails are looked on as containing soul in surpassing measure, because they are constantly growing, a proof of their indestructible soul power. And therefore they are careful to prevent others from getting possession of the cuttings of their nails. No one will cut his nails after sunset, because then evil spirits are swarming around, who might get

<sup>1</sup> The Battaks cut their long hair when they become catechumens. Reitze, the missionary at Si Gaol, on the sea of Toba, tells how a chief, who desired to be a christian, allowed a Battak teacher to cut his hair. At the first cut of the scissors he exclaimed in terror: "Lord Jesus, let me remain in health." Any one who ventures to cut his hair shows that he is earnest in his purpose to give up heathenism. A Battak heathen, convinced by the power of God, and desiring to become a candidate for baptism, prayed the Christian teacher to cut off his long hair, for if another did so he would die. An old heathen in Uluu earnestly entreated that his "sanctuary," his long hair, might not be cut off, which would be his death.

<sup>2</sup> May not the scalp-hunting of the Indians be traced back to the same animistic root.

hold of the cuttings and thereby gain power over him. Saliva is medicinal, because it contains soul power, and is frequently spread upon the sick. Those who offer sacrifices spit upon the offering in order to add to it a part of themselves. Expectorated saliva must not be allowed to fall into the hands of an enemy.<sup>1</sup> Soul-stuff is also found in the teeth. Perhaps the widespread custom of filing the teeth meant originally an offering to ancestors, in which one gave up part of one's strength to preserve the rest. The sweat also, as a secretion of the body, contains soul-stuff, and so far as it communicates itself to the clothes, these become saturated with soul-stuff. The water that has washed great men is regarded as lucky, because it contains their sweat. Footprints can be bewitched by means of the sweat that adheres to them.<sup>2</sup> Dew, as the sweat of the earth, promotes health. Finally, human soul-stuff is found in tears, in urine, and in excrement. Urine, therefore, is used as medicine, and also, in Loba, as an antidote to dreams of evil purport.

• A shadow is supposed to be some shadowy soul-stuff. The souls of the dead cast no shadow, because they no longer participate in the soul-stuff. Hence the shadow is regarded as a projection of the soul of the living. It is therefore forbidden to walk on anyone's shadow or to beat it. The shadow of man must not fall on a grave or a place where evil spirits dwell, otherwise the spirits will get the owner into their power. A man must not let his shadow fall on other people's food, else the eater will appropriate with his food the man's soul power, and he will pine away.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Helmich, the missionary, writes from New Guinea: "All fragments of food, the husks of betel nuts, and cigar ends, are either entirely removed and destroyed or carefully hidden from the stranger in a purse which they always carry with them, lest any one should make *nais pau*, bad magic." Kunze says that the Papuans carefully preserve fragments of tobacco, parings of their finger nails and hair, and even cast-off bandages, because, in virtue of the soul-stuff adhering to them, they may, in the hands of an enemy, become the means of practising evil magic.

<sup>2</sup> Battak Christians assure us that heathen magicians can bewitch the footprints of an unknown thief. The thief would then become a leper or die.

<sup>3</sup> The Washamba in East Africa, like many uncivilised men, are afraid of the photographer. They think the missionary, in taking their photograph,

A man's name is closely connected with his soul. It is therefore holy, and should not be named except when necessary. No one should utter his own name, or that of his parents. If one knows the name of any one, he thereby obtains a certain power over him. Very important is the right name, which must be adequate to the soul. The name of a sick person is sometimes changed, in the hope that the escaped soul may return, attracted by the better name. If any one increases in riches or honour he adopts a new name, conformable to his changed condition, on which occasion a great feast is held.<sup>1</sup> It is very important that children should get the right name, and it is the duty of the magic priest to put them on the right scent. The names of betrothed persons must also match. Sometimes hateful names are given to children to make the envious spirits believe that the children are inferior. Names of dangerous animals, like tigers and crocodiles, are not expressed, but are euphemistically paraphrased—Tiger, Prince of the forest.

In dreams the soul leaves the man and wanders about, actually experiencing the things dreamed of. Hence dreams as realities are highly valued, and so are the interpretation of dreams. The soul of the sleeper in his dream is having

robs them of their shadow, and therewith of their soul, which he sends to Europe to serve the white man, and the owner of the lost shadow must die. In the pictures of their relatives which the missionaries had hung up in their rooms the Washamba saw the shadows. *i.e.* the souls of these relatives. They thought the missionaries had brought their relatives with them, and that at night the pictures became alive and conversed with the white men. Hence they were afraid to be alone in the missionary's room; the pictures might become alive and get loose on them. The Ewe imagine the soul of man to be visible in his shadow. The Papuans also see in the shadow the soul of the man becoming visible.

<sup>1</sup> In every important event the Battaks feel the need of adopting a new name which will do justice to the new situation. If a child is born into a family which resembles some dead member of the family they say the dead man has reappeared in the child, and the name of the dead man is therefore given to the child. If an infant cries much, that is a sign that it has not got the right name. The Ewe have similar views about names. The fear of names, as of the soul in some sort become audible, is found among all the peoples of Indonesia, even among the Papuans.

intercourse with the dead, especially with his ancestors.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is undertaken except they dream of it beforehand. The character of the expected child is announced by dreams to the parents, for the soul of the child in its mother's womb has intercourse with the mother's soul. Mutual dreams must show whether the souls of betrothed persons agree. A dream precedes the inspection of the intended. The matchmaker produces dreams respecting the chosen one by hiding under the lover's pillow some of her hair, or a girdle, or something which has been in contact with her, and so received something of her soul-stuff.<sup>2</sup> The watchers of a corpse must not sleep, else their souls wandering about in dreams may easily be enticed away by the spirit of the dead, which is near at hand. If the soul is frightened in a dream it remains in the place where it was startled, and the man becomes ill and dies. It is therefore strictly forbidden to waken a sleeper roughly, or to frighten him. One must not step over a sleeper, for the soul might be on the point of returning, and would then be scared away.

The soul does not hesitate to leave men if anything displeases it, for it does not essentially belong to them, and has no interest in the maintenance of its temporary dwelling. Hence caution must be used in chastising children. Give them rather their own way, lest the sensitive little souls leave them and they die. The soul in the shape of an animal, a mouse, a lizard, etc., escapes by the nose, the ears, the mouth, or by any opening, often to the terror of an involuntary spectator.

The destiny of human souls is fixed before birth. Those destined for men are, before their time on earth, collected by Batara Guru or Mula djadi in the upper world. There a great tree grows with many leaves on which the different destinies

<sup>1</sup> The Niassers, and all peoples of the Indian Archipelago, have the same notions about dreams. It is so with the Papuans and with the Karens. The Ewe also believe that the soul leaves man in sleep and wanders about. A dream is to them an experience of a real event. The soul in the dream is having intercourse with the shadows of the dead.

<sup>2</sup> Among the Niassers the bride-seeker only ventures to come forward with his proposal after a favourable dream.

of men are inscribed. The soul is then allowed to pluck off its lot-determining leaf. The subject is presented in a different garb in different legends, but they all agree in this, that man himself chooses his own fate, and that this is irreversibly fixed.<sup>1</sup> This fatalism dominates the thought of the Battaks, fetters their will, and kills all energy. They bow with calm resignation to the blows of fate, which are fore-ordained and unalterable, which even throw their shadows on the life after death, for that is only a continuation of the lot chosen for earth. Man is not responsible for his disposition or his actions, for these are determined for him. A change of mind can only take place if that has been foreseen in his destined lot. This determinism, however much it agrees with Mohammedan fatalism, is not an imported article, but an original possession of heathenism. It is found among heathen peoples who have never had any sympathy with Islam. The probability is that Islam has taken over fatalism and many other ideas from heathenism. No doubt the propaganda of Islam finds in this kindred conviction of the Animist an advantage that is not to be undervalued. The Battak calls his destiny "that which his soul has asked for." On it depends man's well-being. The question is whether the soul will accept the good that comes to it. If any one loses a lucky chance he says, "my soul has not accepted it." If things go well with him he has to thank his soul for it. The wishes of a person by no means always agree with those of his soul, but where they differ it is the wish of the soul that is realised, for against it man is powerless. The soul is a power outside and above man, though not identical with fate, against which his attitude is mostly submissive though sometimes defiant.

Whilst the soul is represented as life stuff that stuff is also ascribed to animals and plants. Soul stuff is certainly not so abundant in animals as in man. Animals and plants are a lower grade of animated life. Many animals are supposed

<sup>1</sup> See J. Warneck, A.M.Z., 1904, p. 4, f., for some of the legends that deal with this point. There are similar legends among the people of Nias. More will be said on this subject later.

to have descended from man, the apes for example, and conversely men from animals. Women bring forth animals, such as lizards and serpents. Men sometimes get the form of an animal whose flesh they have eaten. Ancestors sometimes appear in the shape of animals. According to animistic notions men and animals are not far apart. Hence the number of fables current among the Battaks in which animals appear speaking, thinking, moralising, and associating with men as their equals.

Those plants also which are most useful to men contain soul stuff. The dracæna is used everywhere in the Indian Archipelago for purposes, of worship because it is supposed to be strongly animated. A personal soul is ascribed to rice. It is treated with indulgence as a living being, and definite rites and prohibitions are anxiously observed in planting, weeding, reaping, treading out, beating, cooking and eating it, that its soul may not escape, and it becomes powerless and unfit for sustenance. The cocoa nut tree and the sugar palm contain soul stuff. The latter is said to have grown from the body of a woman, and its palm wine is her mother's milk, or, according to another account, her tears. In searching for camphor they use a secret speech to deceive the soul of the camphor tree. The souls of such useful plants are worshipped.<sup>1</sup>

Objects also which are of value to men are thought to be animated, for their usefulness leads to the inference that they possess soul stuff. Soul is awarded to the house, the hearth, the boat, the hatchet, the iron, and many other instruments, not because they are fetiches, but because their usefulness is proof of their soul power. Among the Mentawey islanders every object has its soul (Regat). When a tumble-down house fell in, the blame was not supposed to be the laziness of the owner neglecting to repair it, but the soul of the house had fled and must be solemnly brought back.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> When a Kamba desires to get wood from a tree for medicine he prays thus to the soul of the tree: O tree, I come to thee to ask a gift. I have a sick friend and know not what has made him sick. I come hither to thee, O tree, that I may get something with which to treat him that he may be healed.

<sup>2</sup> Among the Ewe, the weaver prays to his loom, the huntsman to his gun,

The souls of men, animals, plants, and even those of lifeless things influence one another. One can augment or invigorate one's own soul stuff through that of others, and can also partly or entirely lose it to another soul owner.

The life of the body is entirely dependent on the greater or less amount of its soul stuff. The important thing in eating and drinking is not so much the matter of the food as its soul stuff, for this alone gives health and strength to the eater. No animistic heathen, therefore, expects the gods, or spirits, to consume the material of the food which he places before them as an offering, but only its soul stuff. The matter that remains is deprived of its power of nourishment, and consequently is of no value to men. 'The flesh of an animal that is eaten produces an effect on man corresponding to the qualities of the animal in question. A dog is lively and courageous, and therefore the eating of dogs' flesh must produce liveliness and courage. The flesh of a stag gives nimbleness. Gamecocks are made to devour centipeds in order to assimilate their fierceness. Javanese thieves carry with them crow bones to be as clever at stealing as crows. The numerous prohibitions as to food in sickness are rooted in this idea. Certain foods in some circumstances drive the soul out of the body, and these must be avoided. When heathen people come to the missionary for medicine they never fail to ask what food the sick man is forbidden to take. For the missionary, who is regarded as a magician, must know the kind of food to which the soul has an aversion at the time. The food that a pregnant woman desires, however absurd it be, must be given her, for the soul of the child requires it for its growth. If anyone has been bitten by a poisonous animal, the animal is killed and its flesh eaten by him who was bitten in order to make the bite harmless, for the soul of the poisonous animal, which is thereby appropriated, is immune against its own poison. Conversely, the soul stuff contained in human hair has the power of promoting the growth of trees and of useful plants.

the smith to his hammer and anvil, the joiner to his saw and plane. The Karens ascribe a soul to most things, to rice for example.



This notion throws light on the enigmatic custom of cannibalism, which we meet with in India, among the Battaks, Dayaks, Alfurus, Papuans and on the Bismarck Archipelago. It is not, at least originally, an act of foaming revenge and does not even spring from a perversion of taste. On the contrary, it is supposed that in eating a man's flesh the eater appropriates the other's soul, his vital power, and this is most effectively done while the victim is alive, for if the body be cold the soul has fled.<sup>1</sup> The liver, the palms of the hands, the sinews and the flesh of the head are eaten by preference, for these are the parts of the body in which the soul stuff is supposed to be specially concentrated. It is assumed that an enemy wounded in battle or a great criminal, such as an adulterer—these are devoured—must be a man of power and daring, whose soul stuff is therefore of value to warriors. He who eats the palms of the hand obtains strength of hand, etc. The habit of drinking blood is widespread, and should be judged in precisely the same way as cannibalism,<sup>2</sup> for the soul stuff has special vigour in the blood. Among many peoples the blood of an enemy just slain is drunk.

There are also objects which, in themselves, have no soul matter, but, for some reason, have such matter ascribed to them. Some peculiarly formed root, or some wonderful stone, is seen, and its striking shape is supposed to indicate an indwelling soul power. That makes the object of great value to the Animist, for he can use it for his own good, viz., for the strengthening of his own soul power. Such objects may be called fetiches. Idols as fetiches are unknown to the Indonesian. Wherever we come upon stone or wooden images, protective or ancestor images, they have religious value only so far as they are artificially supplied

<sup>1</sup> No one among the Battaks enjoys the eating of human flesh. On the contrary, the cannibals have often to fight with nausea, and they are in the habit of mixing the human with other flesh.

<sup>2</sup> In Toba we were told that a chief cut open the breast of a captured enemy, tore out the quivering heart and drank the warm blood—not certainly for its pleasant taste, though the satisfaction of revenge may have had a place there.

with soul stuff. But an object thus supplied with soul is not worshipped, for it is not the abode of a deity or an ancestor. It is, however, attended to, fed and smeared with blood or rice, that the soul stuff dwelling in it may not be diminished, but may always retain its utility to its possessor. Thunderbolts, marvellous pieces of metal, stalactites, and such like things, are reputed to have special soul stuff, and are used as fetiches. In this sense amulets are fetiches. They are mostly stones, scraps of lead, and things of extraordinary formation; these are carried about, and credited with the power of increasing their possessor's soul stuff, and protecting him against evil spirits.<sup>1</sup>

The souls of men have a mutual relation to each other. The influence which one person exerts on another must be traced to their mysterious soul powers. The soul of the mother must watch over that of the child that is in her womb. If an abortion takes place the soul of the mother has failed in its duty, and the soul of the child has flown away while it was inattentive. The woman was perhaps much depressed, and, in her grief, her soul neglected to watch over the soul of the child. The consequence is, an untimely birth, that is, the soul of the unguarded child has escaped. If a woman dies in giving birth to a child, it is a sign that the soul of the mother refuses to accept a child. This, therefore, is a death that is regarded as extremely disgraceful. The corpse of the woman is thrown beneath the house and there buried, after its eyes, ears and mouth have been stuffed with ashes. If any misfortune happens to the child the blame is again laid on the soul of the mother. If a child becomes ill, an offering is brought to the soul of the mother that it may not abandon the soul of the child. The souls also of relatives, on the mother's side, have great influence on the soul of the child, and must

<sup>1</sup> The Battaks call everything that impresses them by its strangeness, greatness, or mysterious power "grandfather," a burning glass, for example, whose powers they do not understand, a watch, and the like. Happy is the possessor of such a wonderful object for the soul power it reveals may be of the greatest service to him.

be conciliated with offerings and presents. The souls of parents all through life exercise an influence on those of their children, and *vice versa*. In congratulations there is a standing phrase seriously meant, "May our souls rule one another," that is, act as guardian spirits to one another. On a higher stage the prayer is, "May thy soul rule me," that is, influence me favourably.

In the selection of a bride it is exceedingly important that the soul of the wooer match with that of his elect, a harmony of souls which has nothing in common with what we understand by the phrase. It does not mean love, but that the soul matter of the two parties match.<sup>1</sup> Matter must unite with matter, as in a chemical union. The surest sign of a harmonious marriage is offspring. If married people have no children, they should, nay, must separate, or the man must take a second wife, whose soul matches better with his. The magic priest can know beforehand whether the souls of bride and bridegroom match with one another. It is also revealed by dreams and omens.<sup>2</sup>

The soul of a chief exercises a dreaded influence on his subjects, for it can give them happiness or unhappiness. His power proves that he has much and strong soul stuff, and therefore can be dangerous. In a law court it is not so much the judicial authority as the soul of the judge, that is feared. The Battak priest King Singamang aradja, has most soul, and is therefore superstitiously feared. His commands regarding worship are absolutely obeyed. In war it is a man's own soul or that of his kindred that protects him from wounds or death or drives him on to death. If a bullet flies close past a warrior he says, "My soul has turned the bullet out of its course." The soul powers of an enemy are more to be feared than his weapons, for through his magic arts he can draw the soul to his side and so annihilate its owner. When one of two people, who are ill at the same time, dies, and the

<sup>1</sup> The Ewe thus express it. The man must take that woman who was already united with him in the pre-existent state, or the marriage will be unhappy.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. 47.

other recovers, the soul of the latter is supposed to have overcome the soul of the former. The pupil of a magician has no need to fear the rod, but does need to fear the soul of his teacher.

The human soul can be decoyed away by other souls, and the souls of children are specially sensitive and difficult to preserve. No one must visit the parents of a recently born child without bringing a present for the child's soul. Magicians can entice away souls and draw the soul of a thief to them. They can also incline the soul of a virgin to that of a youth. Many can win the soul of a woman by love potions, or by playing on the flute. The spirits of the dead are more capable than the living of drawing souls to themselves.

Friendships and covenants are ratified by a mutual drinking of blood, or by the parties mixing some drops of their own blood in order that their souls may be blended. The same thing is done in treaties of peace. The same consideration makes one like to be spat upon by people who are accounted fortunate. Poor people appropriate the chewed betel leaves of great chiefs and gulp them down in order to bring something of their glory to their own souls. People who are clever at speaking are entreated to spit into one's mouth. Sick people are breathed upon by the healthy in order to bring them healthy soul stuff (breath magic). For the breath also contains soul. Parents, on Nias, catch with their mouth the last breath of their dying child. Women in child-bed are breathed upon in order to help the birth. But anyone who comes in contact with a sick person may have the sickness transferred to himself, if his soul accepts it, in which case the sick person recovers.

When we remember that the Animist regards the soul as a separate entity in man, independent of him, capricious and often in conflict with him, and at all times a danger to him, we can easily understand, that though it is matter, it is an object of worship. In point of fact more careful worship is offered to the soul than to the heavenly gods. Man has to reverence his own soul as well as the souls of

other living men, especially those of his own and his wife's relations. In a difficult case of labour the soul of the child is prayed to come and a sacrifice is offered to it. Sacrifice is offered to the soul of the mother, that it may be willing to watch over the child. Sacrifices are also frequently offered to the souls of relatives that they may bring their influence to bear upon the child's soul. A man has constantly to watch over his soul for, exposed to a thousand influences, it is always tempted to leave him. The souls of the living like naughty children are fond of having to do with coffins, follow them when they are carried out, place themselves upon them and settle down at the grave. If cries and gifts should not succeed in enticing them away, the man to whom they belong will die. Many cases of disease are explained by saying that the soul of the man because of some sudden fright or attraction of a spirit has left him, and needs to be brought back.

A solemn procession is made to the place to which the priest conjectures the soul has been carried. In front marches a virgin carrying on her head a tray with cooked rice and eggs, as an offering to the spirits who have captured the soul. Then follows the priest, and behind him the nearest relations of the sick man. These must not look behind neither to the right nor the left, nor speak a word, while all who meet the procession must get out of its way. After the sacrifice has been laid on a little altar in the open field the priest entreats and conjures the soul of the sick man to return. He promises gifts and presents, smites with a stick in all directions so as to scare away the hurtful spirits, till he is supposed to have enticed the soul back. The return journey is very carefully performed, for the recovered soul has now to be led. The relatives go in front, the magician behind them constantly entreating the soul to come with them. Meanwhile the sick man's house has been cleansed and the floor covered with mats. No one is permitted to remain near the steps of the house at the time when the expedition is expected to return, that the soul may find the way clear. When the magician leaves the house he calls

out from below, "O soul of R. R., art thou now at home?" Some one from within answers, "yes," and so the soul's return is happily accomplished. Inside the house it is again entreated and exhorted in friendly terms and with promises of beautiful garments and savoury meats to leave the body no more.<sup>1</sup>

Frequently there is a formal hunt for the escaped soul, when it is captured and carried in handkerchiefs to the sick man. Sometimes it is enticed with rice and with other foods. This custom of soul capture is found everywhere in the Indian Archipelago.<sup>2</sup> There is another means still to help the sick person to regain his soul. A human effigy scantily clothed is manufactured from a bapana tree. Hair, nail cuttings, dirt scraped from the scalp of the sick man, or such like, are put in the navel of this figure to transfer something of his soul stuff to the image. That makes it the sick man's substitute. This image is carried out like a corpse to the spot where the spirit that holds the soul is supposed to be. It is there laid down, and the soul of the sick man is summoned. If some one anywhere answers the cry it is supposed that this is the answer of the soul, and that the spirit has accepted the substitute. The company return to the village joyfully, and the magician says to the sick person, "Be of good courage: protect us, we protect thee; take care of your father, your mother, and your property." A similar practice is where the effigy of a man, made of clay, is placed on a trestle, given betel, hen eggs, cooked rice, and carried out to the field. There the magician cries with a loud voice, "Take what belongs to you." The sickness is then transferred to anyone who may chance to be heard speaking at a distance. The idea in these ceremonies is that a substitute has been given. In the first case the animated effigy is an equivalent for the soul of the sick man,

<sup>1</sup> Among the Ewe, also, a man's sickness is produced by his soul leaving him. The priest can bring it back. Spieth, *l.c.*, p. 511.

<sup>2</sup> It is surprising to find this animistic custom in China also, where the escaped soul of a sick child is called back by cries and waving of handkerchiefs.

and is offered as such to the hostile spirit. In the second case the soul of the unfortunate person who accidentally makes a sound must take over the disease. The soul of the person who is ill is released by offering to the evil spirit a substitute. Hence the Battaks call these figures "body-substitute, soul-ransom."<sup>1</sup>

The soul is also directly addressed in prayer. Such a prayer runs: "Here, O my soul, thou hast betel, I confess that I have failed in duty towards thee." Then follows an enumeration of the faults, which for the most part consist in having given it no present for a long time past. "I bow in reverence before thee, and from this day will better my ways; and I give thee this betel as earnest money. If I am well I shall bring thee anything I have that thou desirest, savoury meats, garments, and jewels. Have compassion on me." In sudden alarms the first thing is to tranquillise one's soul, to soothe and console it, and promise it a present. Parents do the same thing with the soul of their child. They dedicate to it a fine woven garment, "the soul garment," a knife, or such like, which is henceforth cherished as a talisman. Offerings are also made to one's soul, a very solemn process in which the offerer wears his best clothes. Rice is heaped on a tray, with flesh or fish above it, and this is handed over to the soul with a present, perhaps a garment, a sword, a spear, or an ivory arm-ring. In specially critical cases they dedicate to it a house, a piece of a field, a dollar, a horse, or a hen, with which the fortune of the possessor is henceforth united. These things may be used, but must not be sold. The soul, which in the mind of the Animist has a separate existence, makes real use of these devoted objects. If anyone has an uneasy dream, he must at once bring an offering to his soul, lest it run away.

Nevertheless, when things go against a man he often curses his soul, calls it the soul of a dog, for upon it he lays the

<sup>1</sup> One not familiar with animistic modes of thought might think they were presuming on the stupidity of the spirits in foisting on them an image instead of a living man, but it is only an animated image that the spirits accept.

blame of his misfortune. This, however, only happens in extreme wrath, when the man has lost control of himself.

Moral feeling has no more connection with the soul than it has with belief in the gods. The soul is not the better self in man, nor the spiritual side of him. The soul neither punishes nor leaves him on account of his evil doings. It pronounces no judgment about good or evil. It is supposed, no doubt, that the soul—of a chief, for instance—may exhort another, and make him sensible of his wrong, viz., his failure to comply with the general custom, but it does not punish its owner. The soul is not an organ of morality. If parents in anger chastise their naughty child, the soul of the child becomes seriously ill, and the parents, fearing that it may run away and make the child ill, hasten to beg its pardon, and present the child with a *pandjoraan*, that is, a gift, as an expression of regret for their wrongdoing, and a promise of improvement for the future. It is said that man has seven souls,<sup>1</sup> one of which is buried with the after-birth of the child, and influences the man throughout his life. It comes to him occasionally to warn him. We might, therefore, infer that it performs the work of conscience. But its warnings do not extend to the moral region. It warns man against what may do him harm; it inspires him with courage in war. More than that it cannot do.<sup>2</sup>

When a man dies his soul power leaves him in order to animate other things, men, beasts, or plants. It always

<sup>1</sup> These seven souls, regarding which their thoughts are not quite clear, may, in all probability, represent functions and motions of the soul. The function of one of them is to watch over man, another watches over his property and descendants, a third produces valour, a fourth is the avowed opponent of the body, striving to drag it to destruction. The seven are not kept distinct in thought and soul-worship. The Karens also ascribe seven souls to man which signify different powers, mostly of an evil kind, which influence him. (Eppler, "Die Karenen," p. 68.)

<sup>2</sup> Kruyt maintains that the soul of man, which is buried with the placenta, represents his conscience. This soul, which has become personal, meets him in the other world as judge and judges him by the standard of the national customs. The judicial "conscience" questions the dead man about three things—was he brave, was he generous, i.e. had he property, did he beget children. In any case this conscience gives no judgment about good and evil. It judges according to the values that prevailed in the earthly life.



remains a power on this earth that can never be exhausted. The soul that continues to live, which must be clearly distinguished from the corporeal soul, is called begu—spirit, ghost. At first it feels very uncomfortable without a body ; it searches for its old body and surroundings ; it sits on its grave and terrifies the living. It likes also to settle down on certain fowls, such as the hawk. Should the cry of such a bird be heard the survivors exclaim, “ Be not angry with us, we have not driven thee away, thou hast voluntarily left us.”<sup>1</sup> For a long time it is not safe to be near the house of the dead at night, because the dead man is moving about there. From the moment of his departure the spirit of the dead is feared, as, out of ill-will, he would like to drag others with him into death. A great number of things are to be observed in connection with the corpse, with its burial, and afterwards. All their mourning customs are rooted in their fear of the dead.<sup>2</sup> During the first day perfect silence is enjoined lest they attract the attention of the envious soul. The head is covered with a veil ; all ornaments are laid aside ; as little as possible is eaten, and that only at night as the spirits do that they may seem to be like spirits themselves. For the same reason they paint themselves black, the spirits being supposed to be black.<sup>3</sup> The hair is cut off for an offering to the dead, *pars pro toto*.<sup>4</sup> It is fear that leads them to place food on the dead man's grave, to bring him his tools and coin, that his shadow may use them in the other world and be content.<sup>5</sup> The inhabitants of many islands sacrifice some one, preferably a slave, at the grave in order that they themselves may be spared.<sup>6</sup> The impelling motive is always fear, not

<sup>1</sup> Among the Ewe the survivors assure the dead man that they are not to blame for his death.

<sup>2</sup> This is the case even among the Basutos in Africa.

<sup>3</sup> This holds good of the Papuans also.

<sup>4</sup> This custom prevails in Madagascar. At the death of King Radama all his subjects had to shave their heads. Every ornament was forbidden, all work stopped, play and dancing prohibited.

<sup>5</sup> The Papuans also supply the dead with food and tobacco. They usually destroy the belongings of the dead. Here and there the widow is strangled that she may accompany her husband to the other world.

<sup>6</sup> The bloody human sacrifice has been recently replaced among the Toradja,

grief nor piety. To prevent the soul of the dead from returning to the living, thorns are laid upon the corpse, which is firmly bound, its thumbs and toes tied together, ashes put in its eyes, an egg placed in its armpits, all with the view of making it incapable of movement.<sup>1</sup> Separation from the dead is thus symbolically indicated. A piece of rotang is divided, one-half of which is kept by the living and the other placed in the coffin, which signifies that all intercourse is now at an end. The funeral company on departing step over the coffin or creep under it.<sup>2</sup> As soon as the coffin is brought into the house the body is placed in it, and the lid fastened down, else the soul of some living person might slip into it. Meanwhile every one who can turns himself round lest his soul might be tempted to follow the dead. For the same reason no one cares to be near the grave. They spit behind the coffin and bathe after the funeral. They bury the dead where he cannot see his village.<sup>3</sup> Only widowers are allowed to bury a widower; only parents who have lost children can carry the coffin of a child. The coffin is not carried out by the door in the usual way, for the soul must be deceived.<sup>4</sup> Coffin and grave are made as narrow as possible to prevent the soul from taking others with it. If a man is not buried at home his soul has no rest, and therefore the corpse of him who has died among strangers must, if at all possible, be

for example, by making a slave family dwell a long time at the grave, and during that period treating them as souls of the dead. (Kruyt, "Animisme," p. 285 ff.)

<sup>1</sup> The Basutos cut the sinews of the dead and bind them with thongs. They have also human sacrifices. Those killed are to serve as pillows for the dead in the other world. Among many peoples the backbone of the dead is broken.

<sup>2</sup> The bush negroes of Suriname measure off their height with a tape and put it in the coffin or the grave, else they do not feel safe from the spirit of the dead.

<sup>3</sup> In the funeral rites of the Ewe the belongings of the dead are torn up and scattered on the path to turn back his soul if it should seek to visit the living (Spieth, p. 634). Things which the dead were fond of must be laid in his grave, otherwise his spirit will demand them. If his belongings are given him he will go quietly to the underworld.

<sup>4</sup> In Nias a new path is made through the thicket by which the corpse is carried forth. The soul must not find its way back to the village.

brought home. The head at least must be buried at home.<sup>1</sup> The soul remains in union with the body till the flesh has rotted ; and only after a great feast has been arranged does it pass into the kingdom of the dead. The way thither is full of adventure and danger : there the soul is received by a guardian of the dead. It must at the last cross a sea or river. That is why among many primitive peoples the coffin is made in the form of a boat or a canoe. And it is only after the great feast has been held, before which the corpse is supposed to be only provisionally buried, after the spirit has passed into the kingdom of the dead, that they feel safe, and mourning ceases.

The kingdom of the dead is supposed to be under the earth or in dismal places. The life there is a reflection of the earthly life. He who dies a chief is there a chief ; slaves remain slaves, and the magician continues to carry on his trade. The dead do business like men, they arrange council meetings, play at cards and dice, wage war and celebrate festivals ; they have wives and children, fields and cattle. They dwell with one another in families.<sup>2</sup> The more descendants anyone has on earth the better does he fare in the kingdom of the dead. If one has died a poor man his importance there may be increased if his descendants here grow in wealth and honour. The position of the dead is, therefore, dependent on the fortune and conduct of their descendants. When men are celebrating a festival great flocks of spirits are present as unseen envious spectators. The vices, passions, and sufferings of the living disquiet also the inhabitants of the kingdom of the dead. The life and pursuits of spirits go on at night time. There are old legends which tell how men succeeded in finding their way to the underworld and what

<sup>1</sup> Among the Bush negroes of Suriname part of the hair at least must be cut from the head of anyone dying abroad and be buried at home. The hair of all dead Ancans must be buried under a tree in the village of the tribe where the original ancestor was supposed to reside.

<sup>2</sup> The kingdom of the dead is pictured in the same way by the Niassers and the Papuans. The whole essay on what the Papuans say about soul and spirits proves that the Animism of the Papuans is the same as that of the Malay Indonesian.

they saw there. There are also legends which have some kind of presentiment of retribution in that life. People who in this life would not be advised there act like perfect fools; men who went about with plans of murder continue to think of murder; gamblers evermore taste the bitterness of play; gossips get a long tongue, and every one holds up before the eyes of the thief the objects he had stolen. Yet these are only isolated legends, and in the beliefs of the people there is no living idea of retribution after death.<sup>1</sup>

Men who die of shameful diseases, such as leprosy and cholera, become slaves in the kingdom of the dead.<sup>2</sup> Suicide is regarded as most shameful, for it proves that the soul no longer desires to preserve the body, and a bad lot awaits the suicide in the kingdom of the dead. Shameful in the highest degree it is to die in child-bed, to die childless, or to meet any sudden or violent death. A very humble position is the certain lot of such in the other world.<sup>3</sup>

The Battaks divide the souls of the dead into three classes: (1) Begu, souls of the dead in general; some of these are good-natured and in certain circumstances well disposed towards their descendants, some of them are bad. They are all more or less to be feared. (2) Some of the Begu, in course of time, if they have many descendants who show them due honour, become higher spirits, gaining a distinguished position in the kingdom of the dead. These are called Summagot. (3) Higher than these are the Sombaon, the most eminent of the ancestors, founders of great communities; these must have at

<sup>1</sup> It is the same with the the Niassers (Sudermann, "Nias," p. 72 f.).

<sup>2</sup> Nothing makes a greater impression on the lepers who are under the care of the missionaries, or native Christians, than the assurance that in the other world they shall cease to be outcast pariahs.

<sup>3</sup> The Ewe believe that people who have died "an evil death"—by violence or in a shameful way—have a special place in the kingdom of the dead, where, stained with blood, they find no rest. They are buried with contempt. Among the Niassers the earth reckons with every one before allowing them to go further towards the underworld. Anyone who has done evil, who, for example, has left no descendants, is stifled in the grave by the earth. At a later time souls must pass over a bridge as narrow as the edge of a knife. Only those succeed in crossing who have never ill-treated a cat and who have male descendants.

least seven generations. These ancestors are solemnly invested with this dignity by a great feast. They are thought to dwell in some grotesque part of the earth, in some old tree, on a high mountain, in a cavern, or in a sulphurous spring. All nature is peopled with them. They blend into the nature deities from whom it is often difficult to distinguish them. The worship of terrifying natural phenomena seems to have gradually passed into a worship of these earliest ancestors.

But for all that it must not be said that the Battaks believe in the immortality of the soul. The shadowy life of the soul gradually ceases. It is not explicitly said that the Begu die, but in course of years they are allowed to vanish.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the memory of a dead person dies away, which in the case of an ordinary man is very soon, and in the case of the most renowned ancestor is not more than ten generations, his existence in the kingdom of souls ceases. According to animistic thought man is immortal only in his descendants; he lives on in his family. They inherit his belongings, he enjoys what they have. Happy is he whose descendants are many. It is not the individual who is immortal; it is the family as long as it does not become extinct. The individual goes willingly the way of all flesh provided he has sons to propagate his race. He only who has no sons really dies. To the Animist that is a bitter sorrow. Daughters do not count, for they are lost to the family by marrying into another stock and thereby getting other ancestors. They are of no value, because they can offer no worship to the spirits, so in that way are of no use to the dead.

The worship of spirits is reared on the basis of Animism. The real kernel and centre of the religions of the Indian

<sup>1</sup> The Niassers say: Man dies nine times in the underworld, each time after as long a period as he had lived here, and at length he becomes quite black. Many become animals. The Olongadju Dayaks say: Man dies seven times in the other world and is then reborn on earth to die again, and so on without end. That would be a kind of transmigration of souls of which we find no trace elsewhere in Indonesia. The Toradjans believe that souls die seven times in the kingdom of the dead and are then definitely dead when they take the form of stalactites. The Papuans think that man dies a second time in the other world, and then all is over with him.

Archipelago is this, and in comparison therewith the worship of the gods has almost completely disappeared. The worship of spirits has to do with demons and ancestors, yet the boundary between ancestors and nature demons must not be rigidly fixed.<sup>1</sup> The worship of ancestors has almost entirely appropriated the cult of demons. For the spirits of the dead in their malicious doings are scarcely distinguishable from the demons.

Two things must be kept in view in ancestor worship. On the one hand, the dead are expected to bless the living, that is, those with whom they were related by helping them to obtain riches and descendants and by keeping away from them, sickness, failure of crops and murrain of cattle, in short, they are invested with divine attributes and functions. But, on the other hand, the position of the dead is, in the most melancholy way, dependent on the behaviour and condition of their descendants. They are fairly comfortable in the kingdom of the dead only so far as their survivors honour them and are themselves of some consequence. The dead man is entirely dependent on the consideration and social position of the living. Hence the Animist knows of no greater misfortune than to die without descendants, for such an one has nobody who feels bound to serve and honour him after his death. The dead demands, with the instinct of self-preservation, that the living honour him; and he compels them to do so by afflicting them. Ancestors are honoured because one's own well-being is dependent on them. But even those spirits, who can make no claim to the worship of descendants, compel men to offer them sacrifices, for they, too, have power to torment the living. The worship of ancestors is rooted not in piety, but in fear. A living old father or grandfather is often abominably treated, for there is nothing to be hoped or feared from him. But as soon as he is dead the situation is changed. The prudent descendants bewail him with many tears and marks of sorrow; they provide for

<sup>1</sup> The Christian Battaks at once use Begu, that is spirits of the dead, for the demons of the Bible. Everything demoniac presents itself to them in this dreaded form. They call nature demons, and recently the devil, Begu.

him pompous funeral obsequies ; they adorn his grave with great taste ; they offer sacrifices that are often beyond their power, and finally they set him among the heroes.

Moral background is here entirely wanting. The dead are desired not only to leave the living in peace, but to bless their families. In return for this service the soul of the departed claims not only reverence and loving remembrance, but also sacrifices and festivals. In honouring his ancestors a man serves himself. The world may not praise his piety, but it does praise the riches that have enabled him to provide such a brilliant festival. The ancestor festival has often the secondary end of displaying the opulence of its giver. The living father cares little whether he be considerably treated, if only he receive after death that honour, which gives him distinction in the kingdom of the dead. That leads, among the Animists as everywhere else, to the defrauding of the poor, for they can offer nothing considerable to their ancestors. Hence we can easily understand how the mind of the Battak should be set on riches. How he gets them is of no consequence. Honesty will guarantee him no higher position in the other world, while baseness and vulgarity are not there deemed disgraceful.

In spirit worship the main end is in any pressing misfortune to secure the best possible issue. Attempts are made by magic to force the spirits into man's service ; they are deceived, fought against, and, when that is impossible, fled from. Men humble themselves in presence of their mysterious power, but try to make as much capital as they can out of the situation.

The spirits of the newly dead must be specially shunned ; they are soothed by lamentations, which, in some cases, may spring from genuine grief, but which, for the most part, are recited from fear and custom. They are means employed to show the departed soul how dearly it was loved. The Battaks have a special dialect for lamentations sung at the grave. It differs from the ordinary idiom in that the names of all things are paraphrased. That is manifestly caused less by poetic taste than by fear, fear lest the begu may

obtain power over the things and persons if called by their right names.<sup>1</sup>

The dead are feared for a double reason; first, because they seek to drag the living with them to the kingdom of the dead, even their nearest and dearest relations; and, second, because the ancestors are viewed as the guardians of inherited custom. Anything that has become custom is

<sup>1</sup> The same superstition demands that, in war, in sickness, and in the search for camphor, things should be designated by a paraphrase, partly misleading, lest the soul be endangered. As an illustration, take the following lament of the widow of a chief for her husband:—

Ah! my consort, thou hast left me, my prince,  
Me, a rice pod (*i.e.* solitary).

A butting cow am I, a butting buffalo  
Without a mate.

The consort I mean who was taken from me,  
Now am I poor, I who had a consort.

My father (*i.e.* husband), the great, the illustrious,  
Whose walk was noble, who easily demolishes Mount Si—  
Manabun, who rose in strength (like the sun)

And perished grievously.

My father was called in the evening (to the council meeting),  
In the morning he was sent for.

A bear on the street, a tiger in the gate.  
Now art thou overthrown, father, prince,  
My husband.

Oh, my father! who had bones that grew not weary,  
Fingers that did not rest.

I cannot sufficiently bewail my husband,  
My father, who was kind to every one.  
I must think of him when I look upwards,  
When I remember how thou wentest to market,  
Where business flourisheth.

I can no longer see distinctly for the flow of my tears  
When I remember the great misery which is in my body,  
*That I am without a husband!*

#### LAMENT OF A MOTHER FOR HER DEAD SON

O! my descendant, do not yet attempt to leave me,  
A rice pod. I will go into the earth in thy place.  
My father (that is, son) must still live,  
Live in this world.

If thou shouldst die,  
Ah! then I am as a hen whom one has made to fly,



regarded as right, and offences against traditional custom are sins. Wrong is avoided only so far as there is fear of the ancestors avenging the wrong. The vengeance, however, would not fall on the individual, but on the whole tribe. The ancestors, in the other world, are interested in the life of their descendants, and continue in some sort to live with them, though the earthly life alone is *vita vitalis*, and the other only a sad apparent existence. They are always jealously on the watch to see whether their descendants are as punctilious as they were in their day, and woe to them if they have permitted innovations. Through fear of his forefathers the Animist is conservative to the bone.<sup>1</sup> Great chiefs who have won outstanding merit in connection with the politics and life of the tribe, also the founder of a village, are regarded as specially sacred. They watch with keen eyes the doings of their descendants. Besides these, there are legions of wicked demons, spirits of the dead, who are not ancestors, but who, on account of their malice, compel a craven worship. Among these are the dead who had no sons; the souls also of those who died of hunger, leprosy, or cholera; the souls of the very poor; the souls of those whose corpse had shrunk after death. All these are specially dangerous to women in preg-

As a horse which one has let loose.  
 My descendant will leave me.  
 Me, an untimely birth,  
 Which I like a hot pot cannot hold;  
 Like iron smithy work which will not hold together.  
 Yes, it drags me upward, it throws me down like a lid,  
 When I remember thy voice which could not yet speak,  
 Which answered to the words of his mother only.  
 I must drown myself if thou diest,  
 Drown myself in the river Si Tumallam  
 If thou art thrown into the deep,  
 Into the deep abyss, from which one cannot clamber up.  
 I will undertake to make a twisted rope  
 The way to death.

<sup>1</sup> The state of matters in conservative China, the classic land of ancestor worship, is probably the same. It may be hoped that China, now that she has broken with her painfully guarded tradition, will also get rid of her ancestor worship. By giving up the custom she has actually given notice to the ancestors of her purpose to obey them no longer.

nancy and in child-bed.<sup>1</sup> Many diseases are traced back to their influence. Because no one among the living voluntarily honours them, they make themselves to be remembered by setting traps for men. The soul of a suicide is dangerous, and still more that of a woman who has died in giving birth to a child. In their malice they scheme to ruin other women, and procure for them the same lot.<sup>2</sup>

Earth, air, and water are supposed to be peopled with spirits. They are most numerous in the forest and the waste fields, where they lie in wait for the living, and afflict them with disease and madness, or drag them away to an awful death. They prowl round the houses at night, they spy through the crevices of the partitions, or come into the house in the form of some man or beast. Sometimes in epidemics they can even be seen. There are men who have the spiritual gift of being able to see spirits and souls. Sometimes these men see the spirit of the dead stepping behind the coffin and perching the soul of a living man upon it—the inevitable result of which is, that the man must die. The number of dangerous spirits, to which human misery is traced back, is legion. Names are given and attributes ascribed to spirits of particularly bad repute, such as the spirit who causes cholera: he is of a terrific size, and carries a mighty club with which he smites his victim to the earth.

These spirits have no relation of dependence on God. Belief in God, or gods, and belief in demons belong to entirely separate domains. The good-natured God has no power to restrain the mischief of the spirits, and is never besought to do so. The ancestors alone can help in this conflict.<sup>3</sup> We have here an unsettled dualism of religious thought. Convinced of the goodness of God, the Animist, seeking for an explanation of the evil and misery of the world, misguided by the mysterious darkness and horror with which death is surrounded, has been led by his Animism to the spirits of the

<sup>1</sup> Among the Papuans also the souls of those who die a violent death are specially feared. They lay snares everywhere for living men. The same thing is found among the Karens.

<sup>2</sup> The same idea is found among the Kols.

<sup>3</sup> The Ewe certainly expect help from God against evil spirits.

dead. But these creatures of a fancy inspired by fear have gradually overshadowed the Creator. The fear of sinister beings, daily nourished by human misery, has for religious feeling borne down the idea of God. Wurm, in his summing up of the animistic religions, confirms this. He says: "This one God, in whom all peoples believe, is thought of as a good God, but without control of the evil spirits that can injure man, so that men need not apply to Him for deliverance from these spirits, but must work out deliverance for themselves. Hence few sacrifices, or none, are offered to this one God."<sup>1</sup> Wurm also says of the coast tribes of the Cameroons: "No evil that falls on man comes from Loba (God); it is caused by evil spirits or magicians. Having nothing to fear from Loba, they gradually forgot Him, and the purer knowledge of God was obscured."<sup>2</sup>

We stand here at the centre of animistic religion, viz., spiritism. How are the spirits, that is, mostly the ancestors, honoured? Men live in communion with them. No important matter is undertaken without first consulting them. Before and after a journey, a military expedition, or the laying out of a village, they are consulted and presented with gifts. The consciousness of being always dependent upon them makes men endeavour to keep them in good humour. That is done by offerings, mostly offerings of food. The spirits, who would fare ill in the other world without human help, demand from the living means of subsistence, the soul of which (shadow, exhalation) they consume. It is the business of the magic priest to determine who is to receive an offering, and what it must be, in each particular case; for he, in virtue of his science, can hold intercourse with the spirits, in dreams, for example, or by oracles (inspection of fowls). A tradition has been formed as to what each begu must get. Some receive bananas and siri-leaves, others flesh, eggs, or fish. Since the sacrifice to spirits forms the centre of their religion, the heathen are called by Christians and Mohammedans "sacrificers to spirits"—a designation which they also give themselves.

<sup>1</sup> P. Wurm, "Handbuch der Religionsgeschichte," p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> P. Wurm, "Die Religion der Küstenstämme in Kamerun," p. 34.

In return for this service the ordinary spirits are expected to exempt the "liberal" dispenser from their evil attentions. But the family ancestors, who share in all the interests of the life of their descendants, are expected to do more, viz., all that one would ask from God, and in rare cases does ask. They are to confer upon their grandchildren the blessings that seem most desirable to a Battak's heart—descendants, money and goods, flocks of cattle, fruits of the field, and health. In cases of illness they are to arrest the disease, to find a way of escape from every distress, and chase away all evil spirits.<sup>1</sup> Since they have power to inflict evil on their descendants, the report of the magician who, in virtue of his magic, is closely connected with them, or that of the medium, regarding the wishes of the dead is absolutely believed and in every case complied with, even though it lead to debt and poverty, for, as the proverb says, "It is better to be in debt to men than to spirits." Spirit worship costs the Battaks much money, and many a head of cattle, which they give without a murmur.

Ancestors are worshipped through media. The coffin and the grave are specially adapted thereto, for the soul loves the body as long as any fragments of it exist, and likes to dwell at the grave, especially during the first days after death. Hence offerings are laid down freely on the grave. Again, objects which the dead man possessed, parts of his body also, are very effective media, for something of the soul power which once animated him still adheres to them. The soul of the dead likes to return to its bones. Bones, and especially the skull of the dead,<sup>2</sup> which contains soul matter in an eminent degree (the jaw bone among the Papuans), are favourite media for intercourse with the spirits. The skulls of ancestors are carefully preserved, for they give one the power of summoning their former owners. The place where the skeleton, or even the skull, is buried is a kind of temple

<sup>1</sup> No one can say whether ancestors, in virtue of their higher position in the spirit kingdom, or in consequence of special mysterious forces, have power over the spirits of sickness.

<sup>2</sup> Hence the widespread reverence for the skull means reverence for the ancestors through mediation of the skull.

for the spiritist cult. Even hair, nails, pieces of clothing, all the things already mentioned as informed with the souls of the dead, are valuable as media. Over the whole Indian Archipelago certain heirlooms (pusaka) are held sacred, because they are supposed to contain soul matter of the ancestors. No native parts with these valuables. Images of ancestors are also media of intercourse with spirits, though they must first be artificially made so. We meet with such media in Nias and among the Papuans, in Kaiser Williams Land and Dutch New Guinea. A carved or chiselled image, in itself, has no value for the cultus, and must first be artificially made the dwelling-place of an ancestor. The Niasser priest calls on the soul of the dead, and invites it to dwell in the image. Thereupon one waits at the grave till a certain little spider (momoko) shows itself, which is caught and placed on the image of the ancestor. In the little spider they see the embodiment of the soul of the ancestor in question. The image is only fit to be a medium of intercourse when this has been annexed to it. The Papuans also manufacture carved figures in which the spirits of the forefathers take up their abode. These images of ancestors are set amid the worshipping multitude at sacrificial feasts, and food placed in their arms.

The soul of the dead may also settle on a living man as a medium (Shamanism). Here we have to do with an enigmatic form of spiritism which hardly yields itself to psychological analysis.<sup>1</sup> According to reliable statements of intelligent Battak Christians who were eye and ear witnesses and partly media themselves, such an event is enacted as follows. The relatives or families of the tribe are gathered together on the village street, preferably at night, in order to consult the ancestor. The drums begin to beat their muffled monotone. The medium, man or woman (sibao, hassandaran), who, however, is never the magic priest, sits quietly

<sup>1</sup> There is another form of possession which is irregular and outside the cultus. Some one during the visions of possession becomes seriously ill, and is often like a madman. The Battaks clearly distinguish this possession from insanity.

inhaling the narcotic smoke of the incense. Soon he rises, and to the beat of the drums begins a dance. This dance consists of convulsive movements of the hands and feet; it grows more and more lively, and ends in convulsive leaps, the dancer breaking down exhausted. He has now become a new man, and sees the spirit in question coming to him in its earlier human form. He is no longer sensible of his own body; his feeling and thought are those of the dead. The men around him seem to him small, red in colour; he feels giddy. In his exhaustion palm wine and betel are given to him. Frenziedly he swallows often handfuls of the sharpest pepper. Before asking counsel of the spirit that appears in him the medium is tested as to whether the spirit who is summoned is really speaking through him or whether he is feigning it. The relatives inquire about family secrets, about far away members of the family, and about circumstances known only to the nearest survivors. Should the possessed person approve himself by fitting answers the reason why he has been called is stated, and he is asked why he is angry, and what must be done to avert the calamity. The demands of the dead, whatever they are, must be met. Spirits are summoned in order to reveal where things lost or strayed men may be found. Childless married people consult them as to how they may obtain children. The help of the forefathers is besought in epidemics. When the first missionary came to Silindung in the heart of Battakland, a medium, on the occasion of a sacrificial feast, expressed the conviction that unless they slew or drove away the white man with his new customs, the ancestor would bring evil upon his descendants. The medium is frequently also the foreteller of coming events. Thus, from the statements of some old Battak Christians, some years before the appearance of the first missionary, a medium foretold his coming and exhorted his grandchildren to hearken to the good message of the foreign men.

The ecstatic condition is often, though not always, furthered by artificial means such as incense, drum-beating and dancing. A medium, however, is frequently possessed without these.

The medium is much exhausted by his efforts. Not infrequently at the beginning of his career he falls ill and dies ; such people it is said never reach old age. But they have a high place in the people's esteem. They are persons to be revered, and whom it is dangerous to come too near. No one becomes a medium through study (like the *datu*). The spirit himself chooses his own media. While it is difficult to pay the *datu* for his labour, the medium receives nothing. When he dies a successor is not appointed by election or any human mediation, but only by the entrance of the spirit. Shamanism is found among many peoples of the Indian Archipelago, the Battaks, the Javanese, the Buginese, the Alfurus in Halmahera, Buru, Ambon, Minahassa, Borneo, Bali, Letti, Malacca, among the Papuans, and in the south sea. We come upon it also among the Kols, in South India, and among many peoples of Africa. The Shamanism of the Tunguses is highly developed.<sup>1</sup> It seems therefore to be a frequent accompaniment of spirit worship.

In many cases the possessed may be skilled impostors. But that itself does not explain the ecstatic condition. Attempts have been made to trace back the paroxysms to madness or to epilepsy, which are states that may be artificially produced. But the Battaks are capable of clearly distinguishing madness and epilepsy from possession. Mental diseases of course, like all bodily diseases, are traced back to the influence of evil spirits ; but a medium's ecstatic condition is of quite a different character. It does not resemble any known form of madness. A madman never seeks to proclaim the will of ancestors ; he never pretends to be a medium of spirits ; he is tormented not by ancestors but by evil spirits only. Before and after the paroxysms the medium is in a perfectly normal state of mind.<sup>2</sup> A mentally diseased or epileptic person is never consulted about the will of the ancestors. That would be done as the more simple procedure were the ecstatic state of the medium regarded only as a mental disease artificially produced. Moreover the mentally

<sup>1</sup> Kruyt, "Animisme," p. 449 ff. Wurm, "Religionsgesch," p. 57 ff. It also frequently appears in China : H. Talyor, "Pastor Hsi," p. 153 ff.

diseased is entirely unfit to be a medium. Attempts to explain the matter by hysteria, catalepsy, and the like, only substitute one enigma for another. The Battak Christians are firmly convinced that these things are real, and that they are the work of demons. They meet our doubts with the question : Do you know any better explanation ? "The answer we get from Christians make this at least certain that in by far the greater number of cases there is no conscious deception, and that as a rule the Sibaso is left in a state of semi-bewilderment and of eclipse of self-consciousness." The missionary Lett from his experience on Nias declares : "It may be difficult to distinguish the actual influence of demoniac powers from conscious dissimulation, delusion, lying and deceit. But this is certain that in the heathen world still untouched by the Gospel there are dark spiritual powers at work of which we in Christendom know nothing, and that the heathen are exposed to many influences from the kingdom of darkness from which we seem to be protected." "We missionaries must try to do justice to such facts, the more so that we have in all our communities sincere Christians who were themselves formerly under such influence, and who guarantee its reality from their own experience."<sup>1</sup>

Battak Christians, who were themselves in former days media, have sometimes, against their will, fallen back into the possessed state. When, as they say, "they became men again, they were made profoundly miserable by their fall, and they assured me that they must have been acting under a constraint which they could not resist."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Additional proofs will be given in the following pages.

<sup>2</sup> Metzler, the missionary at Silindung, at a time when Christianity had already entered on its course of victory, reports as follows : A sacrificial feast was held by the heathen, on account of a mentally diseased youth. A Christian at the same time appeared as medium, and confessed afterwards to the missionary that he and his wife had prayed that God would keep them from the evil spirit, and yet, against his will and knowledge, he had gone to that village and been possessed, and after regaining his senses was thoroughly ashamed. A Christian woman confessed that the spirit came upon her, and then she no longer knew what was being done with her. The elder of the village and some chiefs watched her when the music began in the neighbouring village. The elder said to her, You are now a Christian, and the evil



The descending spirit makes use of a special language, the words of which, like that of the funeral songs, are partly paraphrases, partly obsolete, and not understood by every one. It is possible that a medium may have practised this vocabulary beforehand, but in many cases most improbable. As a rule the drum must be beaten a long time if the spirit of the ancestor is to come, and the medium is wont to bring on the convulsions by a dance. But neither is absolutely necessary. The ecstatic condition is mostly brought about by a certain intoxication and disorder of mind. Possession rarely comes to a man unprepared, and at a time when no one is thinking of it. Sometimes the medium may not have known the dead man whose consciousness has replaced his own. One who was born a Christian reported two cases in which women, on whom the spirit had alighted, read Battak writings fluently in their ecstatic condition, though in their normal state they could not read. People who at other times can scarcely read display great eloquence in the possessed state. However the ecstatic state may be explained, this at least is certain, that so far as it is not simply deception, the soul of the possessed is interfered with by powers which he cannot control, powers which annihilate his will, his self-consciousness, his own thought, and replace

spirit has nothing more to do with you. At his prayer the woman became quiet, but after a time became restless again. Men held her by force, but could not in the end resist her. She tore herself free, and rushed into the heathen village. Later she came to the missionary in tears, confessing her sin, and that she was ashamed at being seen by the people. How could I have left my children alone in the night if I had been in possession of my senses. Only a few weeks ago my two brothers died, and that would certainly have prevented me from going to such a place if I had known what I was doing. Another woman, in a like situation, confessed that she did not know how she went to the village, and was afterwards ashamed and afraid. Both women are regular churchgoers. A candidate for baptism at Si Marangkir (Silindung), who had formerly been a medium, was again and again assailed by the spirits seeking to possess her. During an illness she suddenly sprang from her bed, and began to dance around the house like one possessed, telling her relatives that unless they made an offering to it—the spirit—which had been formerly promised, it would give her no rest. After she had come to herself, she firmly and stoutly maintained that she did not know what had happened to her.

them by a foreign determining power. It is worth noting that heathen Christians unanimously explain possession not by disease, but by supernatural influences, and they do so with a clearness and assurance which is otherwise foreign to them.

The dead are worshipped first of all by putting their ornaments and property into the grave along with them, by killing slaves and cattle at the burial,<sup>1</sup> by preparing a great feast at which much food is divided among the guests. Three days after the funeral food is placed on the grave, together with the dead man's tobacco pouch and tinder box. Money, tobacco, food, and all kinds of objects are laid on the grave that the dead man may carry them to the relatives who had died before him. The grave is ornamented with the horns of the buffalo that was slain at the death feast, and at a later time with wooden and stone ornaments as a memorial of how much the dead man was honoured. Carved and chiselled images commemorate a dead chief. Prominent heads of tribes are buried at first provisionally, and years after, when all the flesh has rotted, the bones are dug up again amid the beating of drums and the firing of guns. These are anointed, presented with food, and definitely set in a prominent spot. On this occasion as many as fifteen buffaloes and one hundred pigs are slaughtered. By this solemn ceremony the soul of the ancestor is promoted, and becomes a higher being in the other world.

After the lapse of about seven generations from the death of a distinguished man his descendants constitute him a Sumangot. But it is always a matter of *do ut des*, inasmuch as he is now under obligation to bless his people. Whilst sacrifices are offered to an ordinary begu only when he makes himself perceptibly unpleasant, offerings are made to the higher spirits without any constraining cause. Large cattle only must be offered to them. The highest stage to which an ancestor can climb is called Sombaon. He is installed in that rank also by a festival of the tribe. There is built for him on the market-place a little dwelling-house, which he

<sup>1</sup> The Dayaks bury a living slave with the dead.

visits at the feasts. A buffalo or a horse is sacrificed, and its blood offered to him. The Sombaon is a prince among the dead ; it is said that he sometimes ascends to God, and remains a long time with Him. His dwelling, which he chooses for himself, must not be entered by men. He is seen sometimes in the form of an immense serpent. After the manner of semi-deities the Sombaon occasionally mingle with men, abduct beautiful maidens, carry on all manner of roguish tricks, and sometimes bless individuals with rich gifts. To their descendants, however, they are protecting spirits ; they are their real gods.

As the relation to the spirits is in no way conditioned by morality, it is only natural that attempts should be made to turn the power of the dead to one's advantage by means of magic. The magician (*datu*) has a closer connection with them than other men, and knows how to compel them into his service. This, of course, applies less to the ancestors, who, on receiving liberal gifts, are always ready to protect the house, the village, and the tribe, than to the remoter spirits ; these need compulsion before they will serve the magician. That is most clearly shown in the Battak *pangulubalang*. A boy from another tribe is captured ; his confidence is won by dainties. One day he is brought out in front of the village, where his eyes are covered. The magician steps in front of the boy and questions, one might say hypnotises, him : " Wilt thou go whither we send thee ? Wilt thou do us good and our enemies harm ? Wilt thou defend us in war and destroy our enemies ? Wilt thou kill those whom we name to thee ? " To all these questions the boy, without misgivings, says yes. Meanwhile lead has been melted on the fire ; it is suddenly poured down the boy's throat, and the boy dies.<sup>1</sup> The corpse is burnt to ashes ; the ashes and the fat are gathered and made into a magic medicine. This is concealed in a stone image, which thereby becomes endowed with a soul. The soul of the murdered boy is employed as an aid in war ; it is sent out to kill enemies, or to cause them to commit suicide.

<sup>1</sup> The probable object of this mode of killing is to prevent the promises being withdrawn in the death struggle.

They have thereby secured the service of a spirit who is compelled to let loose his destructive powers on all against whom they, his masters, set him. The soul of such a murdered man sometimes descends on a medium much against the medium's will, for, as we can easily understand, they wish to keep the matter secret. The medium in a frenzy stuffs burning coals, or masses of strong pepper, into his mouth, drinks great quantities of filthy water, gathers up remnants of food that are lying about, and devours them with the greed of an animal. Then the spirit cries: "I say it, I say it." He wishes to reveal who he was, and who were his murderers. This must be prevented lest it cause trouble to the murderers. All therefore cry: "You must not do that, grandfather." He also reveals what the inhabitants of the village must do in order to dwell secure and be victorious.<sup>1</sup>

The spirits are even directly opposed. In epidemics they are shot at and attacked with swords, while drums are beaten and a "heathenish noise" made by beating on the wooden partitions of the houses, clapping with metal plates and with boards in order to frighten the begu and make them fly away. If a woman has died in child-bed, all the men in the neighbourhood whose wives are near their confinement shoot towards the village entrance to hinder the spirit who killed that other woman from coming in. Though the souls are incorporeal, yet they seem sensible to shot and stab. At burials also guns are fired to keep them away. When a child is being born the man arms himself with a sword to prevent all evil spirits from entering through the crevices of the house. Certain signs scrawled with chalk upon the house bar the entrance of dangerous guests. Thorns of the wild citron are affixed to the house stairs, and a trough full of water is placed before them, that the spirits may be wounded or frightened,

<sup>1</sup> Attempts have been made to place the pangulubalang on the same plane as the ancestor image of the Niassers, into which is brought the soul of the departed. That is favoured by the fact that the murdered man sometimes visits a medium, and that it is the soul which lives after death and not the impersonal soul-stuff that is in question. I do not know whether soul-stuff or the soul of a dead person is supposed to be active in the magic wand which is so popular. Perhaps that occupies the same stage as the pangulubalang.

for they are afraid of water. An offensive smell drives away spirits. Hence the sick are often enveloped in the densest smoke.

There is no disgrace in fleeing from spirits. Gloomy places are avoided, and people do not care to go out alone. Except in cases of necessity no one leaves the house after sunset, or in moonlight, when the spirits swarm in great numbers. Houses and villages are shifted here and there to escape the influence of evil spirits. Sick people are carried secretly by night into another house to get away from the tormenting spirit. They prefer to deceive the spirits.<sup>1</sup> During harvest loud singing and whistling are avoided lest the spirits should suppose that men were rejoicing at an abundant harvest, and out of envy take their share. Diseases are spoken of euphemistically. If a sick person is improving, care must be taken not to say so, but to paraphrase it—"The sick person is more so and so." The aim of many of the above-mentioned mourning usages is to dupe the spirits of the departed. The ancestors are also occasionally assailed with mockery and wrath.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If a man is hindered, in the day's work he had planned, by an unfavourable sign, he returns home and goes to bed. On being wakened, he acts as if a new day had begun, and goes to his work satisfied with his successful cunning. The Papuans deceive their spirits by setting before them only the tail of the animal, and making the animal itself run while they say: Here, you have a piece of a dog or of a pig. In Leh, little Thibet, a mother fouls the face of her child with filth, which so disfigures the child that the spirits think he is very hateful, and do not envy the mother. Hateful names are given children for the same reason.

<sup>2</sup> A heathen Niasser, who was hard pressed by his creditors, suddenly fell into a rage against the idol which represented his father. He took it down from its place, saying: Idol of my father, since you have not helped me to dignity and wealth, you must regale yourself to-night under the brood-hen, and he thrust it there. Next morning he brought it forth, and blasphemously said: Well, idol of my father, how did you enjoy last night under the hen? Then he swung it out into the bush through the garret window. The Alfurus and Halmaheras treat images and amulets that do not prove effective to strokes of a stick. A peculiar light is thrown upon the idolatry of the educated Chinese by reading the following: Outside the town Nan-wei there are embankments to protect the land against the sea. The land between the embankment and the sea is watered by a canal which is regulated by sluices. The god of a neighbouring temple has power over the sluices, and they must not be opened without his permission. A new official caused the sluices to be opened without consulting the god. It was now said the water could

The worship of spirits, with the fear underlying it, completely fills the religious life of the Battaks and of all animistic peoples. Their whole daily life in its minutest details is saturated with it. At birth, name-giving, courting, marriage, house-building, seed-time and harvest, the spirits must be considered. In wood-cutting, in the laying out of a village, in war, in commerce, in smithy and agricultural operations, they must be satisfied. They share in the meals, the dwelling, the blessings of the harvest. They receive their share of goods before any of the living; they witness everything, and demand consideration. The heathen in their own way are eminently religious.<sup>1</sup> They make no distinction between religion and social life. The business of the family, the state, and everything else is built upon and determined by the religion of spirits. Hence the all but innumerable multitude of prohibitions regarding food, usages, words and actions. Hence the observing of days, the interpretation of dreams, the sacrifices and feasts, with their important claims. The heathen spend much on their religion. To meet its claims they involve themselves in hopeless debt, neglect their labour for their daily bread, impose upon themselves the most absurd sacrifices, and never think of grumbling. In all that, of course, the reference to God or gods falls into the background. The

not flow back as the god was offended. The official caused the image to be brought before him in the Yamen, and the god was commended to throw himself down in presence of the Mandarin as is customary at audiences. The idol was laid with its face on the ground, and the Mandarin scolded it like a woman for its insubordination, condemning its wicked behaviour in not allowing the water to flow back, although that was necessary for the welfare of the land. He then delivered the idol to the constables to give it forty strokes. The people saw nothing extraordinary in that, as it was in harmony with their ideas of the relation between the gods and them ("Chronicle of London Miss. Society," 1907, p. 163 f.). A long-continued drought prevailed in Shan-si. When all sacrifices failed, the idols were dragged from the temple and placed in the burning sun that they might there roast and split, and so send the needful rain for their self-preservation (H. Taylor, "A Chinese Scholar," p. 129).

<sup>1</sup> Religious fear runs through all the relations of the Papuan's life. We get the same impression from the Ewe, the Kols, the Karens, the Basutos, etc.

spirits are really the gods, and never has tyrant more cruelly tormented his slaves than the spirits and demons their blinded worshippers. If the heathen were desirous of getting rid of God, why did they not seek a brighter and more cheerful cult? Why, in all the world, do they worry themselves with religions that yield them only labour and sorrow?

## B. THE CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF ANIMISTIC HEATHENISM

The more thoroughly we study animistic heathenism the more astonished we become at the wonderful system which we had never dreamed of finding among uncivilised peoples, among cannibals and head-hunters. We discover that even vilified heathenism shows a work of thought. Superstition has a system. Its ungainly features are not marked by a planless caprice, but all converge to one centre, the view of the soul as the highest good. The strange world of ideas confronts us as a compact philosophy of nature. We are fairly amazed at the uncivilised man's inherent love of knowledge, the need he feels for a rational approach to the enigmas and forces of the world, and for coming to an understanding with the supernatural. Animistic heathenism must be taken as seriously as the higher religions of Greece and India. It has not found the truth, has even wandered far from it, but what a felt need for knowledge! Animists are engaged in putting questions, the problem of human life has risen upon them, and they are wrestling with the riddle of existence. A melancholy gravity, a tragic sadness runs through animistic religion, and all frivolity and enjoyment of life are far from it. The splendour of the tropics has been unable to brighten the religious life of the Animist. The results of his reflection are dark, hard, and cheerless. The friendly gods are far away, the spirits are numerous and formidable, their service hard, while fate is pitiless and their own souls unmerciful. How

precious must religion be to men when it leads them to accept such burdens!

But however much we may be surprised by the animistic system of thought, we must not suffer it to keep us from looking at the sober facts. It is only the outer side of things of which thought takes hold. We cannot tell whether, in earlier days, God was earnestly sought, but the animistic heathenism of to-day thrusts God and the gods aside. No one nowadays seeks after God. That which was formerly invented, perhaps in a sincere desire for knowledge, is now ossified into rigid misunderstood pictures, which, however much they rule the practical life, excite no one to reflection. Hardly any one can now explain the meaning of usages so scrupulously observed. The Animist of to-day knows no labouring with religious problems, far less any wrestling with them. It is easy to idealise Animism, and to surround its adherents with the glory of souls in eager search for truth. But the picture would not be true. The Animist of to-day is imprisoned in a tradition he misunderstands: his thoughts and aspirations are directed solely to earthly values, and the supernatural interests him only so far as he must come to terms with it in the interests of his earthly well-being. Animistic heathenism exhibits a *complexio oppositorum*; a search for truth and an indifference towards the Divine; a reflection on the deepest problems and a clinging to the stalest externalities of life; a very real, sorrowful resignation accompanied with the deepest moral corruption. The painful labours of former generations have been fossilised, and become a curse to the later ones. But the preaching of the Gospel has to do with the heathenism of the present, and if it does not mean to give up all its influence, must paint heathenism neither too white nor too black: it must do justice to all its forces, the good as well as the evil. An elephant may be taught clever tricks quite contrary to its nature. But that is not the real elephant. The elephant nature must be studied in the primeval forest, not in the circus. Heathenism and its forces are only



understood in intercourse with the heathen. The messengers of the Gospel will only hinder the success of the Gospel by any one-sided emphasising either of the lights or of the shadows of heathenism. Mission work must, in its own interest, endeavour to work out as true a picture of heathenism as possible. It is a matter of necessity, therefore, for us to enter into the details of this question; what features stand out as essential from the chaos of animistic heathenism, its doctrine of gods, souls, and spirits. The missionary ought to be in a favourable position for such an inquiry, seeing he knows not only heathenism, but what is much more important here, he knows the heathen as well.

Any one who has an intimate acquaintance with animistic heathen will see that they are possessed by a reasoned world-view concerning the all-soul and its influences, but that in all real religious questions there is universal uncertainty and great ignorance. There is a desire to understand surrounding nature with its mysterious powers of life and destruction, but it remains full of mystery and dread. They have a dim sense of some higher supernatural power directing these natural forces. They give names to that power; they clothe it in a human garment; they endeavour to find out what it is, yet all the while they feel that they are groping in the dark. Custom and tradition lull them into apathetic repose, but they always become conscious of their ignorance as soon as they are confronted by the sure convictions of the foreigner. The only argument which a heathen brings against any challenging doubt is an appeal to the ancestors, Our fathers taught us thus. Every heathen admits that he knows nothing certain about God, or his relation to Him, about creation and the life to come, that is to say, about those very questions which he would fain have answered. The missionaries when they inquire about religious things always get the answer: "That is not known; we cannot see God." But when they ask further: "Why then do you name the gods and tell stories about them?" the answer is: "The ancients have so told us, but no one knows anything clearly about

them."<sup>1</sup> The inherited tradition about the life after death satisfies them, because they never reflect upon the subject, and know of nothing better. The animistic heathen knows nothing about religious problems and personal convictions, and has no desire to think about them, for he does not regard religious matters as personal convictions to be won, but as a fixed possession of the tribe. All that his countrymen believe he accepts unquestioningly. The religious and intellectual life of the people is smothered in incredible indolence. No one has any sense of responsibility. Every one does what every one else does, and every one bows in submission to what they all fear.

This fundamental uncertainty is found everywhere in animistic heathendom. Asked about his conceptions of the other world the Papuans of Dutch New Guinea are wont to answer, "We do not know." When the people of Madagascar are sounded about their religious affairs the usual answer is, "We do not know that." or, "We do not think about these things." A traveller once asked a Damra highlander, "Who created the earth and the world?" The answer was, "We do not know; we are a stupid people; all that we need to know is how to kill a big animal and eat it." If a Herero is asked, "Whither do your people go after death?" he will answer, "I do not know." Missionaries of the Church of England Missionary Society report concerning the Dinka (Soudan), "They have very indistinct notions about the life after death, and, if questioned on the subject, some will answer (*akwot*), 'We do not know.'" To all his deeper questions, Bohner, on the gold coast, always got the answer, "We do not know." An old heathen of Ma-Gwamba in South Africa said, "Why does our land lie in death? It is because we are ignorant. Let us learn, and our land will live." Even in India, Missionary Gloyer declares of the Dombo in Jeypur: "It is incredible how foolish, ignorant, and

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to discuss religious questions with Mohammedans, but I have never succeeded in doing so with the heathen of Sumatra. They feel the weakness of their position. The Mohammedan becomes keen and angry in religious discussions, the heathen remains cool, admits his ignorance, and intrenches himself behind his inability to know.

dependent the heathen are in religious things. We would do them grievous wrong by assuming that they understood their religion in the slightest degree. They have only a practical interest in it. Father and mother have so done—further than that there is only stupidity." These testimonies, taken at random, could easily be increased.

The system of religion sketched above must not deceive us as to the insecure footing which it gives to its adherents. There are no martyrs of an animistic religion. The inherited piety is supported solely by the rotten pillars of custom and tradition. When we missionaries are gathering material concerning a heathen religion, we get the most diverse answers, for the traditions do not agree. It must not be supposed that the statements we have made above under the rubric, belief in the gods and in spirits, are a spiritual property of the individual heathen. Very few of them can give even fragmentary explanations. It is only by various collections, by knocking at the most diverse doors, by the combination and the comparison of material collected among kindred tribes, that we get any clear picture of his religion, such a picture as indeed never dawned on a heathen mind.<sup>1</sup> He is satisfied to conform to the cultus to which all subscribe. The world of thought on which it is built is to him a matter of total indifference.

The student is surprised to find the same wavering uncertainty in the morality that is closely connected with their religion. It is impossible to construct any harmonious system of the ethics of animistic religion. No doubt a custom has been formed to which all submit, and which they have not the power to disregard. This custom has two roots, the stronger being tradition, supported by fear of the ancestors; that which has been is right, that which is new is to be rejected. Its other root is egoism. Certain limits must be drawn, or everything will go to ruin. Theft, adultery, and

<sup>1</sup> The right view is frequently obtained only by comparison of the views and customs of kindred peoples. And it is just this systematic comparison of all religions of the Archipelago which makes Kruij's book on Animism so reliable in its results.

the like are punishable acts in the interest of decency and order; but they are not morally condemned. Theft is punished at one time, at another it is praised as a sign of cunning. The adulterer is devoured in certain circumstances, viz., when he is poor; when he has no powerful relations to protect or ransom him; but that does not prevent fornication being stamped a manly virtue. Lying is condemned in proverbs, but parents rejoice when their son exhibits adroitness through shameless lying. There are beautiful moral fables which inculcate virtue and rectitude, love and fidelity, but the man who made them the rule of his conduct would be laughed at. Everywhere there is contradiction, obscurity, and ignorance. It can be shown with some appearance of truth that the animistic religions teach that the gods avenge evil, and also that they are utterly indifferent regarding it. Retribution in the other world is postulated and also denied. Their fatalism makes all moral effort illusory. Lofty thoughts and the foulest coarseness go irreconcilably together.

Paul in Acts xvii. 30 characterises heathenism as *χρόνοι της ἀγνοίας*. He calls the heathen in Eph. iv. 18, *ἐσκοτωμένοι τῇ διανοίᾳ ὄντες, διὰ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τὴν οὖσαν ἐν αὐτοῖς*. They are compared in scripture to the blind (Isaiah xlii. 7), and heathenism to darkness (Isaiah ix. 2; Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. v. 8). This does not mean that there is nothing but night and darkness in heathenism. Darkness means, in scripture, ignorance in moral and religious matters; he that is in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth; he has no goal before him; he sees no way, and gropes about in uncertainty. That is precisely the situation of animistic heathenism on its formal side. The heathen knows not whence he cometh, whither he goeth, or how he should demean himself upon the way.

But all the while he longs for certainty, for an authority to guarantee him absolute knowledge. Hence the consideration given to priests and magicians; they pretend to know something certain about the gods and spirits. The heathen runs to them in every time of anxiety and distress, and pays them liberally. Often deceived by them he comes back

again; he clings to them as the only people who know. This is the cause of the breathless interest with which the multitude listens to the utterance of the spirit when he settles on a medium—he must know something certain, for he comes, he says, from the kingdom of spirits. One of our Battak teachers, in an essay on the Battak religion, describes this longing by a parable: “The heathen Battaks seek God, but in doing so they are like the young bird talaktak, who, when its mother has flown away for food, opens its bill at every bird it sees, opens its bill even to the dry falling wood, and only wearies itself by so doing. Before it gets anything to eat, its mother must come. So was it with the heathen in their search for God. They worshipped that which was not God, and they only wearied themselves in so doing, for they made their Father that which was not their Father.” They have recourse to dreams, oracles, inspection of fowls, search for signs, judgments of God, and the like, because they desire a reliable revelation of God.

This uncertainty of animistic heathenism is shown in the numerous inconsequences of its thought and action. Men believe in God, and yet do not trouble themselves about Him. He is called the “source of being,” and yet they trace the origin of man to another source. The ancestors are believed to be dependent on the gifts of the living, and yet they pray to them as the givers of earthly good. Laws are promulgated whose authority is respected by no one, and evil is condemned and praised in a single breath. The idea of an inexorable fate cannot fail to cripple every religious action, and rarely is any effort made by sacrifice and magic to avert the predetermined evil. All these are pure contradictions that cannot be reconciled. When these inconsequences are pointed out to the Battak he has no other answer than the desperate one, We do not know. The Christians among them feel at once those contradictions, and delight to use them in their polemics.

This childish, unprofitable, wavering search has something touching in it, which justifies the hope that the erring will in due time find. At least they have tried to touch the hem

of the Divine garment, and have fallen into the worship of nature, dimly seeing in its forces, and falteringly worshipping there the Deity. They have sought for some explanation of the world, and the life of man with its duties, entanglements and enigmas, which would satisfy them, and they have been caught in the net of Animism, this marvellous philosophy of nature which constructs an All-soul alongside the Deity as the power of life. They have sought to obtain a glimpse into the mystery of death, and the darkness that lies beyond it, and they have fallen into the swamp of spiritism, where they seek intercourse with the dead, and yet at the same time fear contact with them, where they imagine that they are dependent on the events of that shadowy world beyond, and yet dream that the living have power over the dead. But as soon as anything new comes within the horizon of uncivilised man, whether it be the positive assertion of the Christian message or the self-conscious propaganda of Islam, the beliefs he has hitherto held begin to waver. They were never inwardly possessed. The animistic heathen never attempts to force his opinions on the adherents of other religions; he is not sufficiently sure of them himself to do this. So long as his own circle of beliefs is not disturbed he lives indolent and self-satisfied on his capital of inherited ideas. And he draws back in alarm from the stronger convictions of others.

There is something pardonable in ignorance and blindness. They may and do merit blame, but they are not wickedness. Those who have wandered from the way may be brought back, and those who are ignorant may be taught. Hence God could wink at the times of ignorance (Acts xvii. 30). So far as heathenism is uncertainty, missionaries can go to work with hope of success.

If, however, animistic heathenism were only uncertainty and ignorance, the first ray of the Divine message that fell upon it would be sufficient to dispel the darkness and put an end to the blind groping. But there are mightier powers at work in heathenism. There is revealed in it a power of

falsehood and misguidance which is the deeper basis of that uncertainty. We do not mean to say that the animistic heathen is false in the practice of his religion. No, it is to him a holy and a serious matter, the most important business of his life; and even the magician, to whom many gross deceptions can be brought home, is more deceived than deceiving. But all the members of this religion are bound up in a system of lies, against which they are themselves helpless. It must not be said that everything in animistic heathenism is lies. Then it would be altogether inaccessible to Divine truth. The loving, searching eye of the people's friend will discover many scattered rays of light and a keen desire for clearness. But the true thoughts, fettered and all but ruled out of the religious life, are reduced in their influence to a minimum. The idea of God still exists, but has no meaning to the Animist; it is held down by the ideas about spirits and souls. The lie proves stronger than the budding shoots of higher ideas.

What has Animism made of God, the holy and gracious Creator and Governor of the world? It has divested Him of His omnipotence, His love, His holiness and righteousness, and has put Him out of all relation with men. The idea of God has become a mere decoration; his worship a caricature. Spirits inferior to men, whose very well-being is dependent on men's moods, are feared instead of the Almighty; the rule of an inexorable fate is substituted for the wise and good government of God. Absurd lies are believed concerning the life after death, and efforts are made to master the malevolent spirits by a childish magic.

Animistic heathenism deceives its adherents about the worth of life and the way to happiness. It plants in their minds a false estimate of temporal good and natural life, putting earthly values in the first place and God in the last. It declares that health, abundance of children, property and power constitutes man's happiness, and any means of obtaining them is good. The heathen is deceived here in the same way as the drunkard, who is persuaded by his passion that drink must bring him rest. It is the same lying power

which, in opposition to the clear Word of God, persuades us that riches and might are happiness, although it is manifest that they are not. The lie promises "life" to the heathen, if he observes the animistic commands and prohibitions, cultivates his soul, ruthlessly treads down all others, and keeps the spirits in good humour.<sup>1</sup>

Animistic heathenism deludes man as to the worth of his personality, of that within him which is Divine. It deprives him of his freedom, his personal spiritual life, and degrades him to a will-less, thoughtless member of a flock of cattle. Who is it that gains the promised "life"? The most diligent idolater, in exchange for his sacrifices and conscientious observance of usages and prohibitions, only gets an increased sense of fear. The result of the restless search for God is a growing estrangement from God. The heathen is religious, and without meaning it he is constantly blaspheming God. The thoughtful man sees that he has been deceived in his wishes, hopes, offerings, prayers, and acts of worship. No promise is ever redeemed. It is not mere error into which the poor Animist has fallen; a positive lying power has mastered the ignorant. Left to itself heathenism might have lost God and neglected His worship. But it could not have created such a caricature of religion for its own torment, unless some lying evil power, taking advantage of its ignorance, had painted for it a picture of God, and of the world which leads the heathen far away from all he seeks. Animists believe that they have God, and they have lost Him; they believe that they are hunting for life, and they find death; they believe that they are serving God and are His opponents. In this sense Paul says of the heathen that they are carried away to dumb idols even as they are led. They give the impression of a people who are misled and deceived in the most shameful fashion, and who all the while believe absolutely in the lies by which they are being hypnotised.

<sup>1</sup> If you show the Battak the folly of his idolatry, you will always get the answer: Is it not life that we are seeking in this way? This answer, which is seriously meant, covers the basest cruelties.



The lying power has also brought about an inconceivable perversion of moral ideas. It represents to the Animist: "You are not responsible for your action, for God has created you as you are," the blame of all human shortcomings being thus thrown upon the holy God. The lie kills man's belief in his moral freedom; and it condemns his will, the divinest of God's gifts, to impotence. The bad is declared good; the most vulgar egoism is made the sum of the commandments. The lie is all the more dangerous in that it is mixed with elements of truth. Murder, theft, adultery and faithlessness seem to be condemned, and there are abundant moral proverbs which would lead one to infer fine moral feeling.<sup>1</sup> But these proverbs do not truly reflect the moral condition of the people. Wickedness and vulgarity are praised and practised without compunction. Harmless things, such as offences against politeness, are reckoned sins, while stealing, leaving the sick to perish in their misery, robbing widows and orphans of their goods, torturing to death the defenceless and such like, are not deemed wrong. Human sacrifices, head-hunting, cannibalism and brutal cruelty are pious exercises of religion, part of the ritual of spirit worship. What a fearful power of falsehood is here that can thus turn upside down their ideas of good and evil, and rob them of all moral sense.

The hypnotising power of the lie is manifest in the fraudulent trade of the magician. They know and admit that the magician is an arch-knave who deceives wherever anything is to be gained, but they are afraid of his mysterious art, and they neither desire nor deem it possible to be freed

<sup>1</sup> Here are some Battak proverbs. The empty ear of rice stands erect, the full one bends low. Pride is the beginning of destruction, politeness is life, insolence is ruin. When his wrath is rising a man does not think of destruction. Do not strike the man who treats you with consideration, and do not fall upon him who is coming to meet you. You will not lose by giving to one who begs; the rising sun cannot be arrested; there is a reason for a man being lost, a cause for his going to the bottom; nothing but evil comes from contention; money got through robbery vanisheth. There are also moral fables which treat of charity, fidelity, pity, and gratitude, and which would do honour to Gellert. The Niassers have similar proverbs with the same low state of morality.

from the enchantment of his influence.<sup>1</sup> They turn to him again even when his avarice and deception have become notorious. The lying sway of the magicians presses more heavily on the adherents of the African religions than in the Indian Archipelago. Bohner the missionary denies their claim to supernatural powers, and regards them as shameless charlatans.<sup>2</sup> And yet the degraded people submit without a murmur to their lying rule. These mischiefmakers are called as deliverers in cases of sickness or misfortune, and information is expected about the life after death from professional liars, simply because they pretend to be in communion with the other world. The oracle of the spirits through their media ; is it not like a caricature of revelation ? Deceived grossly a thousand times, the animistic heathen are willing to be deceived again and again. About fourteen years ago, there appeared in Battak land a wonderful deceiver, Guru Somalaing, who dressed up a fantastic mixture of heathenism, Mohammedanism, Protestant and Catholic dogmas ; he sent forth silly oracles concerning himself, declaring that he was a worker of miracles ; he was a liar of the most vulgar kind. The Battak Christians mocked him, but the heathen ran to him in thousands ; willingly they gave him money and cattle ; they stood in the pouring rain while he declared it was not raining. And to-day, when all his prophecies have been proved false, and he himself banished by the Dutch Colonial Government, many of his adherents still cling to him. One gets the impression that the heathen are attracted magnetically by lies ; that having forsaken God they have to pay tribute to every deceiver. A heathen negro in Suriname admitted : " You serve the truth and we serve lies. 'The lie always gains increasing power over us, even when we do not wish it. When we are in distress we turn again to the lie.'"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Battaks admit that they are shorn in the most shameless way by the magic priest, but stupidly retort, What can we do, we cannot refuse to call him.

<sup>2</sup> Bohner, "Im Lande des Fetischs." Spieth also convicted the magician in Tobo of many gross deceptions, *e.g.*, in the judgment of God.

<sup>3</sup> The Niassers believe the magic priest when he offers them the wildest lies. In Nusoer, New Guinea, deceivers sometimes appear, pretending to be

Deceived and defrauded in their religion the heathen are themselves given over to lying. They seem to have lost the sense for truth and honesty. It is no exaggeration to say of the heathen of the Indian Archipelago that they are all masters in the art of lying. Lying is to them synonymous with cleverness. There are many virtues to be found among heathen peoples, but hardly anywhere a love of truth. The Battaks cannot understand that lies are dishonourable. If you convict a Battak of a lie, which is really a very difficult thing, because he is so adroit, he will laugh heartily and think "you are more crafty than I." At every step one is told impudent falsehoods, so that one comes to disbelieve every heathen. The missionaries among the otherwise lovable Niassers have the same experience. "These Niassers are shocking liars, so that one is gradually forced to distrust every one of them, and even every word." Without a quiver of the eyelid they will use the deepest curses to confirm their lies. It is the same with the Dayaks on Borneo. The peoples of the Indian Archipelago are quite infamous for their mendacity. The same is the case with the inhabitants of the Talaut Islands. It is said of the people of Haruku, With a countenance of the utmost indifference they will tell an untruth so gross and shameful that you smite your hands in astonishment, and, if necessary, they are ready at once to confirm the lie with an oath. The Papuan, although he says lying is bad, looks upon it as a fine art. He is dexterous in every kind of deception, and is a master in stealing.

the expected Manggundi, who is to bring a happy life free from labour. Everything they say is believed, even when they declare that they can raise the dead. Though disappointment always follows, they are ready to believe the next deceiver. An experience which Spieth had on Togo shows how willing the heathen are to be deceived. A man in Ho, in order to put a celebrated magician to the proof, came to him pretending to be ill. He smeared his leg with dirt and declared that the leg was badly injured. The magician declared it to be incurable, as he had got it from a diseased person in the pre-existent state. The man then took off the bandages and showed the confused magician that his leg was quite sound. The spectators, however, far from being convinced of the deception of the magician, drove away the man because he had tempted God and measured his strength with God.

We are told that Ranawalona I., the anti-Christian King of Madagascar, whose inhabitants are partly of the Malay stock, among the grievances which he had against the Christians, brought forward their unintelligible truthfulness. In the Edict it is said: "The answer you give in taking an oath is, 'It is true.' When you are asked, 'Do you swear,' your answer is, 'It is true'—that surprises me. What do you mean by this word true?" Eppler adds this comment: To the people of Madagascar, among whom a lie is a great virtue and wisdom, it was certainly quite incomprehensible and incredible. The Herero and Nama are shameless liars. The Kaffirs are masters in lying, and it is almost impossible for a European to convict a Kaffir unless he has convincing proof in his hand. The man who speaks the truth makes himself ridiculous. The missionary Rössler declares that every word of the Shambala of East Africa is a lie. An african chief does not know the truth, as it is one of his princely privileges to be at liberty to lie. Sebuschane says of them: "You must put the same value on the saying of a chief as you do on the bellowing of an ox. The Betschuans are all untruthful. The inhabitants of the Bismarck Archipelago are all notorious liars and thieves. But lying prevails in other religions besides the animistic. An Indian proverb says thirty-two lies a day or an empty stomach. The Hindus lie whenever they open their mouths, and can hardly speak one word of truth. It is a grievous sin for them to kill an animal, but no sin to tell a lie. Gloyer declares of the Indians: "The heathen have been deceived and defrauded from their youth, and that has made their hearts untruthful."<sup>1</sup> Lying and deception are among the national sins of the Chinese.<sup>2</sup> These testimonies could easily be increased. Mendacity, lack of the sense of truthfulness and honesty, is a feature

<sup>1</sup> A peculiar light is thrown on the much-boasted religiousness of the Hindu by their appalling and shameless lying. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

<sup>2</sup> I have never known a heathen on whose word I could put any reliance. A Chinese is never more in his element than when uttering a shameless lie. A lie to them is exactly what an appropriate answer is to us (Griffith John).

that we come upon with striking unanimity everywhere in animistic heathenism, and also far beyond its limits. Mendacity is not merely a national sin of this or that people, but might be said to be a natural and necessary manifestation of heathenism.

The result of this atmosphere of falsehood is universal distrust. No one can trust his fellow. The father distrusts the son, the son distrusts the father. Behind every word they scent a lie ; behind every movement treachery. Hence, an oath is demanded in every protestation, in every dispute a judgment of God. Nothing but the fear of the vengeance of dark powers can make any one speak the truth. The lie is all the deeper rooted in the life of the people that their religion is pervaded by it. The spirits are more dexterous liars and deceivers than the living. Even the ancestors, who, in a certain sense, take a benevolent interest in the fate of their descendants, are not to be trusted. Hence, and this is the climax of the habit of lying, the deities are deceived in their very worship.<sup>1</sup> Lying and cheating are not wrong, but exhibitions of skill when it is a matter of gaining an advantage. The deities and demons also deceive. As the man so are his gods, and as the gods so are their worshippers.

There is much untruthfulness in Christendom certainly, and falsehood has become a sad power, even in the German nation. But, in spite of its power over individuals, the Christian conscience of the nation is against it. Lying is in direct contradiction to Christian feeling, and so long as the people hold to Christianity it will not avail to poison social relations. But animistic heathenism furnishes the lie with papers of legitimation, for it belongs to the system. It is not merely individuals who lie, everybody does so without any public conscience reacting against it. The reason is, that animistic religion is itself a lie. Whatever true ideas it contains in no way changes that. Truth is only where there is a right relation to God. Heathenism has perverted the rela-

<sup>1</sup> A Battak heathen, whom a missionary called to account for his wickedness, and pointed to the final judgment of God, answered, "I will play God a trick."

tion to God ; it is thereby placed on a false basis, and given up to lies. The perversion of the relation to God has made religious worship, prayer, morality, all the relations of men to each other, and to the surrounding world, inwardly false. Nothing but a relation of man to God, grounded on truth, can make human life true. But heathenism has not this true foundation, and so does not know the way to truth. It cannot of itself overcome this power of falsehood. God alone can give back to people thus misled the truth which they have lost.

Heathenism is Godlessness, and cannot but be given up to the dominion of lies. We do not mean by that, that God is an unknown conception in Animism, and that there is no attraction towards Him. A longing and seeking for God runs through the animistic heathen world like a vein of gold in the dirty rock. Spite of all polytheistic, spiritistic or pantheistic overgrowths, there is no heathen religion in which there does not lie hid some dim presentiment of a deity who is of greater importance than all other deities and spirits. Religious questions are the real impelling powers which determine the development of life in animistic heathendom. And those mission-workers, who are unable to discover ideas of God in heathenism, amid all its errors, commit a serious mistake.

Everywhere in the Indian Archipelago we come upon the idea of a supreme Deity behind the motley multitude of gods and demons. We have already seen how the Battaks thought of Debata (God) as above the five upper gods and the host of nature deities and spirits.<sup>1</sup> However little they trouble themselves about this vague idea, yet their religious feeling is rooted in it. We are also assured that other polytheistic peoples feel this drawing to God. The negroes of Central, and West Coast, Africa, as well as the Kaffirs, know of a supreme God. The Supreme Being worshipped by the Ewe negro is called Mawu, "He who is excelled by nothing." An old chief said to the missionary Spieth, "If

there is any one in my village who does not, every morning on rising from his mat, pour out water on the earth and say, 'O, God Sodza, possessor of flesh, grant me this day my food, and grant that I remain in life,' he is not a man. When we go to the field to break up the soil with the hoe we say beforehand, 'Mawu, God.' " But the worship of the Supreme God is thrust into the background by the lower gods and demons. The Washamba are aware of a Supreme God, also the Waganda, the Congo negro, the Sudan negro, the Herero, the people of Madagascar, and the Bush negroes of Suriname. Speaking from his own experience among the Kols Jellinghaus says, "I have come to see more and more that all heathen know that God is, and that if a dozen heathen of the most diverse kinds were to find themselves among Mohammedans or Christians, and to listen to their talk about God and God's dispensations, it would seem to them as self-evident that God is one and the same for all, as that there is only one sun. This God, Singbonga, is alone the true God, whose existence the heart of the Kol is still capable of feeling. But this inherited faith exercises little influence on the life."

These testimonies could be increased to any extent from books on the history of religion, and from missionary literature. Stosch, in summing up the results of his inquiry, says: "The unity of God is part of the contents of the natural conscience. In spite of all pantheistic and polytheistic obscurings, in spite of all confusion of erroneous belief and fear of demons, a remnant of the consciousness of God has been preserved among all peoples. And this remnant is capable of life."

This belief in God must not, of course, be called monotheism. It is not the possession of the one God, but a mere dim perception shining through the haze of belief in spirits, a dim memory of something better than the present, and a longing for it that mostly does not even become conscious. The presentiment of God scarcely influences religious thought, and has no influence at all on the religious shaping of the life, though it is in contradiction with present-day religious

practices. One has no interest in the unknown God. The heart of the heathen is like a palimpsest, the original writing of which is written over and become unseen. No one knows anything of the words of wisdom covered over there.<sup>1</sup>

It is sometimes said that this purer idea of God could be gained only after long development. Beginning with animistic beliefs the peoples advanced, under the pressure of fear, to the worship of animals and ancestors; from that to the worship of nature, out of which grew the gods; and then, through a richer polytheism, they worked their way up to the gradually refined idea of the one God. This hypothesis contradicts the picture of real heathenism which every one gets, from familiarity with it, who does not look at it through coloured spectacles. The idea of God is not a development from spirit worship, but is a contradiction of any such development. It is a foreign body in the animistic world of beliefs. It is opposed to the nature deities, to the conception of the soul as an all-matter, to demons and ancestors who have taken the power out of God's hands. It is opposed also to the inexorable fate which banishes God from the world, that is to say, it is opposed to all the factors that determine the animistic religious life. When we see how the heathenism of to-day rejects the idea of God; how the whole religious machinery is driven by the demons; how the priests, the leaders of the religious life, mock the original ideas of religion by magic and barter; how all things are brought under the ban of a deadening tradition, and how no one among them really digs deeper or strives further;—when we see all this we cannot believe that it is a process of development that is going on, but rather a process of decomposition.

How do we know that the original beginnings of human religion are contained in Animism and demon worship? The judgment of Soderblom is: "We must not believe that the religion of the lower uncivilised peoples and tribes is a faithful picture of the earliest religion. Though these

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jellinghaus, "Die Kols," p. 64 Amn.: "The common essence of heathenism is not a denying of God . . . but an ignoring of Him in the worship of natural powers and mysterious demonic powers through magic and magical sacrifices and ceremonies."



peoples have no history, yet many thousands of years have not passed over them and left no trace. In some cases it can plainly be seen that their usages and beliefs mark a fall from a more childlike, but purer and stronger, religious conception. That is especially the case with those tribes and peoples among whom sorcery and magic have completely stifled the religious sense of reverence and trust." If the spirit worship that prevails among the Animists were the oldest religion of mankind from which every other religion was developed by a long and laborious process, how could these religions, which represent the initial stage of development, derive any nourishment, in that initial stage, from the idea of a supreme God, who, *ex hypothesi*, should be the last member of a long series of acquisitions laboriously won. Why does the Indonesian, when in great distress, flee to God, of whom, according to that hypothesis, he should have no knowledge whatever. How is it that, in taking an oath, the Animist appeals to God. That is forestalling his development indeed. It is a fact that he has the idea of God; but the fact that this idea is but dimly apprehended proves that we are not dealing with a new idea victoriously opening up new paths. The idea of God has proven unfruitful in the development of their moral and religious life. It is like a precious, but fragile, ornament packed away in the very bottom of a trunk, which the members of the family scarcely ever see and which they never use. The Animism of to-day gives us the impression of a religion that carries the marks of a fall, of a worship no longer understood and become an empty ceremony. Former generations reflected on problems of the supernatural; they clothed in myths and names of gods their astonished reverential thoughts about the inconceivable powers of sun and earth. But now they repose listlessly on the inheritance of the fathers, and scarcely a trace of reverence can be found.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable, at any rate, that there must have been a time when our Shambala had a better understanding of the meaning and significance of all the formulas and ceremonies which they now thoughtlessly use. The original essence of the religion of the Kamba did not consist in this belief in spirits and its religious practices. That is not only proved by the fact that

The Battaks have been deeply influenced by the Hindus who ruled the coasts of Sumatra. That is proved by their language, which is mixed with Sanscrit words; by their writing, which springs from the same source; by the names of the gods and the remains of some temples. Now should not the higher Indian religion have fructified the lower Battak one had that lower religion been in a state of development? But that has in no way taken place. On the contrary, the Battak Animism has dragged down to its lower level the ideas of God imported from India. The words that were taken direct from the Sanscrit have entered into the service of sorcery. All deeper thoughts have perished. Mohammedanism even, with its higher idea of God, cannot introduce into the heathenism which it influences any development for the better. The heathen, who have passed over to Islam, quietly retain their demon worship. Instead of the purer idea of God raising them, they drag it down to their own filth, a proof of the tremendous down-drag which animistic religions possess.

Many heathen peoples have legendary reminiscences of a better state of things when men were in intercourse with God, and were happier than they now are. Even savages of a low type dream of a vanished golden age. We have already mentioned that the Battaks believe that heaven was once nearer and more accessible than it now is. The Niassers call the second of the eight stories which are found above the earth the golden, whence came their forefathers. The natives of Molucca, the Toradja on Celebes, the Olongadju on Borneo, maintain that heaven

unintelligent observance of ceremonies and symbolical acts is always a sign of religious decadence, but is confirmed by the previous existence of a purer idea of God, the Almighty Creator of heaven and of earth (Brutzer). The worship of the gods in the upper world and that of the forces of nature, in a word, the mythological worship of God, is driven into the background by the worship of ancestors. That is undoubtedly a retrogression. It means that the worship has never risen to a feeling that could satisfy the heart. It is as if the cultus could never raise itself above fear and awe (Adriani, "Mittel-Celebes," p. 52).

was formerly nearer earth. The same belief is also found in the South Sea. The Kols declare that men at first were innocent, and became wicked later. Singbonga therefore sent a great flood, which destroyed all men save two.<sup>1</sup> A legend of the Alfurus in Minahassa tells that formerly the gods maintained active intercourse with men, and the earth was full of blessing till the guilt of a daring man brought all intercourse to an end; now one vainly seeks for any trace of that blessing on the earth. The Toradja declare that in former days men did not die. When they became old they simply got a new skin, like the serpents, and with it a new life and youthful powers. Papuan legends tell of a time when men lived in heaven, and there was neither sickness nor death. But having been persuaded by a gigantic lizard to descend to this world, they could not return, and became the prey of death. The Ewe negroes declare that men in olden times lived longer and were more happy. Heaven was then quite near to earth, but God moved heaven far away, because men, after eating, wiped their dirty fingers on heaven, and struck God in the face with their implements, or, according to another tradition, molested Him with smoke. Those legends express grief for a lost good.

In former days there were no priests as mediators between gods, spirits, and men. Their appearance upon the scene relieves the individual of the necessity of dealing with the deities. The priest undertakes that for all. But superstition is intensified thereby, and heathenism poisoned by sorcery and magic. Formerly, when each man was his own priest, religion was simpler and religious exercises more inward, because more a personal matter. The appearance of the priest and magician, to whom the work of divine worship is now committed, and from whom all religious knowledge is obtained, bears witness to a lowering of religious needs.

<sup>1</sup> A legend of a flood is found among many peoples, such as the Karens, the Santals, the Papuans, the Sambesi.

The study of heathen language also makes us see that the religions of uncivilised peoples are not struggling upwards, but are degenerating. The religious vocabulary of the Battak language is very rich, but in part so obsolete that even the priests do not altogether understand it. The religious ideas which those terms express must have been richer in earlier days. The heathenism of to-day manages to get on with a reduced capital of words. The result to which Büttner was led by the study of the languages of Africa is that everything which can be regarded as traditional custom proves that these people are still going down, and that their former condition was relatively more perfect. Thus we find that in repeated attempts to fix the existing vocabulary, many of those missing higher ideas were existent in former times, and many such words, almost vanished from general speech, are yet found at times in the mouths of old people.

The history of all heathen religions is the history of their fall! Stosch, speaking of the higher religions of India, says: "In the religions of civilised peoples, whose documents reach back many thousands of years, there is perceptible the law of a development which is not to life but to death. They move not in ascending but in descending lines. In earlier times pantheism had brighter colours. There was in it something of a longing for the light. Now its colours are darker, and the longing for the light, though still there, has become more hopeless. Any one who studies the pantheism prevalent in India to-day, will find himself in presence of the dark world of demons. In earlier times the religion seemed only to play with this world. Now it has fallen into its power. It would be a great mistake to suppose that it is only some of the lower castes who have yielded to demon-worship. All religious usages are ruled by it more or less, especially the public worship. Indian pantheism has thus been transformed into a spectre producing fear and dread. The decadence can hardly go deeper. To-day efforts are being made in India to bring in again the religion of earlier days; that is the best proof

that the original religion is believed to have been purer than that of the present."<sup>1</sup>

The Buddhism of to-day also is not what it once was. In further India, nay, even in Ceylon, in Thibet, China and Japan it has, in order to maintain its existence, entered into an unhappy union with the nature religions of the peoples it has influenced, and has approved their worship of idols and ancestors. Confucius did not see anything in the old Chinese religion that could be improved by development, but desired to conserve the old, which he deemed the more perfect. Reformers of a religion have something of the prophet about them. They are not the natural fruits of the development that is inherent in the religion, but men who set themselves to resist its degeneration. Every reformer and the reformation for which he fought is followed by a relapse. All human religions obey the law of the attraction of the earth.<sup>2</sup>

A dispassionate study of heathen religions confirms the view of Paul that heathenism is a fall from a better knowledge of God. In earlier days humanity had a greater treasure of spiritual goods. But the knowledge of God's eternal power and divinity was neglected. The Almighty was no longer feared or worshipped; dependence upon Him was renounced; and this downward course was continued till nothing but a dim presentiment of Him was left. The creature stepped into the place of the Creator, and the vital-power, the soul-stuff, and the spirits of the dead came to be

<sup>1</sup> The middle and lower classes of India are already so impregnated with the worship of spirits, of fetiches, and the crassest superstition, that its book religions can offer no resistance to the gradually increasing fetichism. The most that it can do is to cover the latter with a deceptive whitewash. It is no longer polytheism or idolatry, but wild superstition, witchcraft surrounding and dominating everything, immorality, fear and social misery, that predominate in the practical life of all these peoples, in China and India, no less than in Africa (Wagner, "Die heidnischen Kulturreligionen und Fetischismus," pp. 81-99).

<sup>2</sup> Mohammedanism also is in process of decomposition. Even the Jewish and Christian religions have stamped the down-drag on their adherents, as is proved by the history of Israel and the Christian Church. God Himself must interpose in times of degeneration and work against the law of gravity.

worshipped. Men went so far as to worship the sub-human, the devilish, and were given up to blind fear of the object of their worship. The religious fall was followed by a moral fall. The proverbs, the fables, the ideas of justice, that have been handed down from earlier times prove that the moral standing of animistic peoples was higher then than now. The nations, in proportion as their religious views turned away from God, lost the organ for morality, and sank into the most inhuman abominations and barbarities. Thus to be given up to the lowest instincts is regarded by scripture as the punishment of religious apostasy.

The idols, gods made by men, come between God and man. The roots of life are poisoned by fear of demons and by idolatry. Men make for themselves a real connection with what is non-existent—a caricature of that communion with God for which man is destined (*κοινωνοὶ τοῦ δαιμονίου*). Whether the demons have reality or not, they become real to men in proportion as men estrange themselves from God. As Stosch says: "In comparison with the true idea of God the gods are pure nullities." But behind these nullities the idolater sees the sinister world of demons.

The heathen, in spite of their dim sense of the Supreme God, have no connection with Him. The way to Him is barred by the spirits and demons. The Battaks think of the Debata as far away. He scarcely gives a thought to men, and there is no way to Him. The prayers are addressed to lower deities and spirits. The Niasser thinks thus of his far away Lowalangi. It is said of the Kōls that the essential, nay, the exclusive influence upon their thought, feeling and action, comes not from the worship of Singbonga, but from belief in an endless number of evil spirits, the so-called Bongas. They acknowledge it themselves when they say that "We have no need to worship Singbonga, who is much too good and does no evil, but we must worship the Bongas, who seek our life." The Shambala have no relation to Malunga, the Creator. They have forgotten God. The spirits have thrust themselves between God and His children, and holds them in bondage through the fear of death. No

Washamba has any doubt of God's existence, but they find it frightfully difficult to approach Him. The Ewe call their God Mawu, good and wise, and even look on Him as an avenger of evil, but He is to them "a far off, hidden God, of whom only this much is known, that He once permitted uninterrupted intercourse with men, but then withdrew to an infinite distance from them because of their guilt." They do not shrink from calling Him dishonest, because He also created evil, and He does not always act justly, since He has dowered man with death. If you ask a Herero why he does not worship God and sacrifice to Him, he answers, "We do not need to fear Him, for He does us no harm, as our ancestors do." They share the view of another Bantu tribe, the Ndjambi, that the good Creator has withdrawn to heaven, and left the government of earth to the demons. The missionary Richards asked some Congo negroes, "Who created these fruit trees?" and they answered, "Nsambi."—"Where does Nsambi dwell?"—"Kunasulu"—that is, in heaven. He then asked further, "Who created all these things?" and again they answered, "Nsambi, the great Nsambi."—"But why, then, do you not worship and thank Nsambi?"—"O, He does not trouble Himself about us. He does not love us. No doubt He created all things, but then He went away and asks no more about us."

The belief in a great God who created the world, but then withdrew to His private estates and left the government of the world to subordinate deities, is common to all the Bantu peoples. The Waganda call the great spirit Katonda, that is, the Creator, but they trouble themselves very little about Him. The Soudan and Bantu negroes practise essentially the same demon worship. They have preserved, from olden times, the idea of the one God who is over all and who dwells in heaven, but they fear Him less than the spirits whom yet they deem subordinate to Him, and whom they designate by another name than the God in heaven. The Bush negroes in Suriname know of a God in heaven, who created all things, but He is far away, unapproachable, and without interest or sympathy for the inhabitants of earth. The natives of

Madagascar have the name of God constantly on their lips, but this belief in God is not a living faith; every conceivable thing receives divine worship, so that their religion has degenerated into the grossest fetichism.

The heathen consciousness is also without any living sense of God as a determining moral power. Only the fear of consequences and of entanglements keeps them from wrongdoing.<sup>1</sup> If, among most Indonesian peoples, there is any mention of a Judge who in the other world decides whether souls be allowed to go into the kingdom of the dead, this Judge is not supposed to ask about the good or evil doings of the dead, but whether he was brave and generous (*i.e.* rich), and whether he had begotten children. This Judge, moreover, is not God, and has no connection with Him. None of their current rules about right and wrong are traced back to God.

In animistic heathenism God is hardly conceived of as a person. He is not a living mighty God. He is entirely eclipsed by almighty fate. It is not God who apportions man's destiny; the soul chooses its destiny for itself from the general store in the pre-existent state.<sup>2</sup> The lot of man is thereby fixed in its minutest details, and no God can in any way change it. In the Mohammedan conception Almighty God stands behind fate; in the conception of the Animist fate is a more mighty and a more fearful God than He who is called by that name. The life of the heathen is not in God's hands. Why should a man trouble himself about this powerless God? It is of no use praying to Him, for He cannot change man's lot.<sup>3</sup> Though, in the formulas of prayer, God is invoked alongside the spirits, that is just one of the inconsequences wherein animistic religion so abounds.

<sup>1</sup> Thieves do not hesitate to pray to God for success in stealing. The Ewe say: "Every black man prays to God before he steals." Before the thief steals anything he says, "May God help me" (Spieth).

<sup>2</sup> When a Battak meets with misfortune it is said: That was what his soul desired, viz., before his birth.

<sup>3</sup> A Battak tale speaks of a cripple who forced his way to God in the upper world, and besought Him to give him a well-formed body. But, as his form had been predetermined, God, notwithstanding His compassion and readiness to help, could make no change.



We meet with determinism among many animistic nations. The peoples of the Indian Archipelago have all fallen into it. The people of Nias believe in a pre-existence of souls, souls not so much in a personal state as in a kind of general stock or store. From that store souls are weighed out to every man by Balin, the son of Lowalangi. Every man on entering into life is asked before his birth what weight or continuance of soul he wants, what else he wants to have on earth, what kind of death he desires, etc. The heaviest share of soul given out weighs about ten grammes, and whoever wishes and receives that reaches a considerable age. Those who die in childhood had asked for a light soul. For this reason when any one dies it is said, what he asked for is gone. If a man dies an unusual death it is said, what does it matter, he willed it, he asked for it. The Toradja suppose that the Creator forges men with different hammers, that every hammer produces a definite destiny, and that men are given their choice of hammers. Among the Tontemboan in Minahassa, different destinies are indicated by different long-burning matches. The sea Dayaks believe that man's life is correspondent with the growth of a flower in soul land; if this flower languishes the man perishes. The Kols say that the destiny of every man is written on his skull before his birth. In Bettigeri (South Mahratta), an old woman, when asked by Meyer the missionary if she were not a sinner, answered, "That depends upon my fate." In the region of Honor (Kanara) it is a standing phrase, "How can we venture to change our religion so long as God withholds from us the will and the power to do so." The Ewe think of men's souls as pre-existent in the other world with the "Mother of Spirits" who bore them. Thence, at her wish, they go to earth, but must fix a time when they shall return. This "personal engagement" (gbetsi) follows the living man, and constrains him to return to the other world at the time promised. If he is not willing to fulfil his promise he becomes ill and dies. Man brings with him to the world a finished, unknown, and unchangeable character. His actions are therefore justified

by his inborn character. The Æwe are wont to say every man has his own character. The bad man is excused. The gods have denied him the good ; or, that is just my nature obtained from the home of souls.

This wide-spread fatalism, found also in the heathenism of Christendom, destroys the idea of God. It is impossible that a purer concept should in course of time be developed from a heathenism determined by fatalism, for fatalism can have nothing but a destructive influence on religion.

The animistic heathen are, in point of fact, ἄθεοι, without God, not in the sense of the fool who says there is no God ; not even in the sense of the evil-doer who, to sin undisturbed, has, against the witness of his conscience, burned the thought of God out of his soul. They have lost God and are ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς ζωῆς τοῦ θεοῦ (Eph. iv. 18). Between them and Him there has grown up a thick primeval forest, through which they can no longer find their way, and which they have no power to root up. But if, notwithstanding this estrangement, there is still buried away in their hearts a dim sense of the Power who ruleth over all, then the glad message of the living God may hope to find a responsive echo in heathenism. The small, languishing plant of their god-lore is incapable of development ; but the emptied name of God may be filled with a contents which heathenism can never give.

Another thing we must take note of in order to understand the full depth of heathendom's estrangement from God is its subjection to the dominion of devilish powers. The animistic heathen are not only in error, they are slaves. They are bound by three fetters—fear, demon worship, and fate. Fear, in various forms, tyrannises over the Animist in every situation of life. The vision of the world in which his religiousness is rooted is extremely dark. Even his own soul is a hostile power against which he must ever be on his guard. It is fond of leaving him ; it allows itself to be enticed away from him ; it refuses to accept benefits for him. She who is about to become a mother is rendered miserable by fear. Her mother joy is embittered by fear of

her own soul and of the soul of her child, as well as of envious spirits. The souls of relatives are easily wounded, and woe to him who even unintentionally offends them. Primitive man has to wind his way amid the throng of the souls of the people around him, and must continually bargain or fight with invisible and sinister powers. The farmer is not only worried about the growth of his crops and the state of the weather, he has not only to guard his fields against high water, or defend them against rats, destructive beetles, and flocks of thievish birds ; he is helpless also against the soul of the rice, whose moods determine whether the fruits produced by his laborious efforts shall contain nourishing power or not. It is not difficult to fight or circumvent a visible enemy, but who can defend himself against the incalculable soul ? Animism seems devised for the purpose of tormenting men, and hindering them from enjoying life.

To that must be added fear of the dead, of demons, of the thousand spirits of earth, air, water, mountains, and trees. The Battak is like a man driven in a frenzied pursuit round and round. Ghosts of the most diverse kinds lurk in house and village ; in the field they endanger the produce of labour ; in the forest they terrify the woodcutter ; in the bush they hunt the wanderer. From them come diseases, madness, death of cattle, and famine. Malicious demons surround women during pregnancy and at confinement ; they lie in wait for the child from the day of its birth ; they swarm round the houses at night ; they spy through the chinks of the walls for their helpless victims. Gigantic spirits stride through the villages scattering epidemics around them ; they lurk in the sea and rivers with the view of dragging travellers into the depths. They are not laughing fauns or mocking satyrs, but merciless messengers of death, enemies swollen with envy, who would fain hurl the living into the kingdom of the dead. The dead friend and brother becomes an enemy, and his coffin and grave are the abode of terrors. It is fear that occasions the worship of the departed, and the observance of their mourning usages in its smallest details ; fear dictates that host of prohibitions which surrounds every

movement of their daily life. Fear is the moving power of animistic religion, in Asia as in Africa.

This observation is confirmed by the unanimous testimony of historians of religion and of missionary literature. Thus Tiele says, "In the religions dominated by Animism fear appears more frequently than trust. The spirits and their worshippers are both alike, self-seeking. The lower, as a rule, are more worshipped than the higher, the local more than those at a distance, the particular more than the common. Their rewards and punishments, if this point of view prevails, are not measured by the good or bad acts of men in their social life, but only by the sacrifices and gifts which are offered or withheld from them."<sup>1</sup> "The religions of uncivilised peoples are not exclusively, but they are chiefly, a worship of demons. Beings are worshipped who, even in the consciousness of the people themselves, are not regarded as the highest; beings inferior to God, but nearer to man, and who can do him harm. They have their abode here and there in surrounding nature; they may also be spirits of dead men."<sup>2</sup> The fear of demons is very plainly exhibited among the Kols: "While a surprising amount of knowledge of God is revealed in the phraseology of social and domestic life, and while many things attest a childlike, sincere, noble, and free religious sense, yet their religious usages are so perverted, unspiritual, and opposed to all true religion, that they can be described by no other name than superstition. Fear, or ordinary self-interest, is the cause of all that takes place. One really comes to see that fear of sinister supernatural powers is the essence and central force of heathenism, together with the belief that good and evil powers can be made favourable and submissive by means of magic and of sacrifice."<sup>3</sup> "The superstition of the Kols, and their fear of demons, are shown in their belief that almost every mountain, river, pond, road, or village has an evil Bonga (demon, devil) who seeks to inflict all kinds of injury, and

<sup>1</sup> Tiele, "Kompendium," p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> P. Wurm, "Handbuch der Religionsgeschichte," p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> Jellinghaus, "Die Kols," p. 33 f.

who torments people through their great eagerness for offerings." The Kols, naturally so cheerful and joyous, often get a dark, desperate look under the burden of their sacrifices to demons, and, in their desperation, take to drink. The whole life of the Kols is interwoven with fear of evil spirits. They feel themselves threatened by them everywhere, for their number is legion. Fear of the Bongas deprives them of all courage, and cripples their power. The life of the inhabitants of Nias is dominated by fear of the spirits of their ancestors. The Dayaks of Borneo are impelled, by fear, to worship evil spirits (*saniang*, *Hantu*), and are afraid of the spirits of the dead. The Mentawey Islanders are afraid of the *Sianitu*, evil demons, who are appeased by sacrifices. The *Alfurus* on Celebes are afraid of evil spirits, especially the spirits of the dead. The Sumbanese are completely dominated by the same fear. The Papuans worship ancestors, and also dreaded spirits, of whom the number is very great. The Karens in further India, and the inhabitants of the Bismarck Archipelago, are dominated by the same fear of spirits. Among the Hindus also the power of heathenism consists not only in the spirit of caste, but also in this belief in sorcery, spells, maledictions, and disenchantments by the directions of the brahminical books.

Fear also rules in the religions of Africa, whose spirit worship is closely related to Indonesian Animism. In West Africa all diseases are traced back to evil spirits, of whom the world is full. The worship of the Ewe is given to the spirits, and is determined by fear, as the spirits have always evil designs against men. Wurm says that the Soudan and Bantu negroes practise the same demon worship. The more they fear ancestors and the *Losango*, the evil spirits, the less they fear God. From these ancestors and evil spirits comes all evil. The *Dinka* (in Soudan) live in constant fear of the *Jork*, evil spirits, who are supposed to dwell in trees, in the jungle, and other places. The *Herero* believe that evil spirits have the government of this earth. Thus, in every misfortune and distress, the *Herero* are afraid of the dangerous influence of their ancestors, and have an enormous number

of sacrifices, whose sole motive is the fear of spirits. The sacrifices at birth, circumcision, and confinement owe their origin and their continuance to this fear. The sacrificial cult, nay, the whole religious views and usages of the Herero are only too eloquent a testimony to the fact that of them, as of all heathen, the words of the Apostle hold good, that they are all their life-time in bondage through the fear of death. Besides the ancestors they are afraid of other dead folks, hideous evil spirits, and in every illness they see some enchantment. The Waganda are afraid of evil spirits who occupy the central place in their religious life, spirits of nature (Lubare), and spirits of ancestors (Mulimu). Hence the Waganda are in the highest degree superstitious, even the enlightened Kabaka Mtesa being no exception to this rule. Rösler, the missionary, has devoted an essay to "fear in the life of the Shambala," in which he shows that the religious life of the Shambala is entirely determined by fear.<sup>1</sup> Above all they are afraid of the envious, malicious dead. "For he (the ancestor spirit) is greedy, and takes a pleasure in hurting men, visiting them and their cattle with all manner of disease, with locusts and small-pox, and in bringing misfortune on the land." That is how matters stand among all Bantu tribes. We read of the Kamba, "The influence which they (the dead) exercised when in the body continues, nay, it seems as if the power of the dead over the life of his descendants is greater than when he lived, and it is greater there the greater it was here upon earth. The main point is that the spirits are jealously determined not to be overlooked. They demand their share of all that is going, especially in joyous events, else they will bring misfortune on their descendants." The Bush negroes of Suriname are enslaved by fear and worship of the spirits of the departed (Jorkas).

It is a dismal picture that is unrolled before our eyes, every heathen a slave of fear, with no joy in life, but bondage everywhere. But fear reigns beyond the bounds of

<sup>1</sup> Trittelvitz says on this subject: "Among the Shambala, as among the Bantu peoples, fear of the dead, and of death, is the characteristic mark of their religion."

the low animistic religions. The deeper religious speculations of the civilised peoples of Asia have failed to drive away this spectre. A highly educated Hindu, a Tamil interpreter of the Kural, depicts the feelings that seize him who approaches an idol. His hair stands up through fear; tears flow from his eyes, and his body trembles. Earnest Tamuls assure us that they themselves have experienced this dread.

Nitschkowsky says that the ancestor worship of the Chinese is inspired by fear, not by piety, fear of the vengeance of the ancestors. The rulers of the other world are the demons, and the dead are their captives. Like the prisoners of this world these must be supported by their friends. The necessity for ancestor worship is based on this foundation.

At the general conference of missionaries at Shanghai, D. Faber advanced this thesis. Ancestor worship presupposes that the happiness of the dead is dependent on the offerings of their living descendants, and that all those departed souls who are not provided with offerings become hungry spirits, who cause all kinds of misfortune to the living. Ancestor worship is not a mere remembrance of the departed, but an intentional intercourse with the spirit world, with the powers of Hades and of darkness. It undermines belief in a righteous retribution of God in the future, and excites the animal nature of man, as also selfishness and fear, more than the nobler emotions of love.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that Buddhism has failed to root out this fear and ancestor worship from among its adherents, shows how deeply its roots have struck into the heart of those heathen who worship demons and spirits. Buddhist monks help to expel the evil spirits, and, in their cloisters, registers of ancestors are exhibited to whom gifts are to be offered. It

<sup>1</sup> The root of the filial piety which is practised by the Chinese must be a mixture of the two mightiest motives of the human soul, fear and self-love. The spirits must be honoured, because of their power to injure. If the offerings are neglected the spirit is enraged, and meditates revenge. Hence it is safer to worship the spirits.

is not really Buddhism that moves the heart of the simple Singalese, but his old worship of nature and of demons. Buddhism has done nothing to remove these; rather, by its mythological elements, it has furnished all kinds of helps to preserve them. The people of Ceylon have from the earliest times believed in the activity of all kinds of demons (*sanne*), who are responsible for every misfortune, every case of sickness, every dangerous phenomenon. This belief in demons is, to this hour, the only religious power which the people really feel. It has united itself with Hindu notions as well as with ideas and forms from Buddhism. But these two religions have only been the means of introducing new classes of demons, of inventing new instruments of expulsion, and providing new magical formulas. It is the old fear of nature, the old belief in spirits, that really dominates the ordinary man. In Burmah also, where Buddhism has struck its roots deeper into the life of the people, it has failed to become the dominant religious force. On the contrary, the foreground is occupied by the worship of the Nat,<sup>1</sup> personifications of natural forces, and of the spirits of the dead. They dwell in gloomy places, and are very dangerous to men. Their worship is the real religion which steadfastly engages the heart of the overwhelming majority of the Burmese people. Even the Buddhist monks engage in this worship of spirits. The same picture is descriptive of the Siamese. The Buddhism of Thibet also (Lamaism) fears a multitude of nature deities, demons and spectres. The desire to save the soul from hell and lead it to paradise is one of the great levers of Lamaistic piety. Another still more effective lever is the fear of evil spirits. The dread of dangerous and awful demons exists to a most unusual degree. Sacrifices are offered to sinister demons after sunset. The monks exorcise the spirits.

Mohammedanism also, in Northern India, has been unable to remove the fear of evil spirits. On the contrary, it assists

<sup>1</sup> The Nat, or Nats, are embodiments of natural forces, good, and especially evil, spirits to be propitiated. See Monier Williams, "Buddhism," pp. 255, 259, 217.



in the expulsion of the spirits by its malims.<sup>1</sup> It allows the people to go on worshipping ancestors, and adds new spirits of Arabic origin to those already worshipped. Islam nowhere appears among Animists as a deliverer.

For us who know that we are safe in God's hands, it is impossible to imagine what a dreadful power this fear is in the life of the heathen. There we see revealed the kernel of real heathenism, and all its theology and mythology are but the shell enclosing it. With this fetter every Animist is bound. The incessant fear of demons, and of their evil plots, and of the sorcery closely connected with their worship, by which these people are tormented, passes our conceiving. Alienation from God, who alone is to be feared, is the ultimate basis of this irrational fear. Heathenism has lost God, and, consequently, has been given up to the fear of spectres, whose power is real just in proportion to the estrangement from God.

The fear of spirits is intensified by the authority of priests and magicians, who are supposed to cultivate fellowship with the spirits, and to have power over them. The magician tyrannises over the Battak. Whatever he demands must be paid, whatever he arranges must be carried out. For he knows how to injure or strengthen the souls of the living, by restraining or letting loose the spirits. He is a man greatly dreaded among most peoples of the Archipelago. The sway of the magician in Africa is still more pernicious. Whomsoever they accuse of witchcraft is condemned to death. They work in secret with a frightful venom, and no one is safe from them.

The heathen world furnishes an example of how surely fear debases men. Men of fearless character are mostly noble-minded; the fearful are cruel. Surrounded by fell powers of destruction, the animistic heathen grow distrustful and cruel. Fear poisons every social relationship, distrust becomes a second nature to the harassed. The poor fear the

<sup>1</sup> The malims are the lowest order of Mohammedan teachers. Their intelligence is not great, but they have great influence with the people, and are zealous missionaries of Islam.

rich, the weak the strong, the sick the healthy, for each knows that the other is trying to enrich his own soul power at the expense of his fellow. But those whom no one needs to fear are mercilessly trodden under foot. In Nias, Celebes, Borneo, the lands of the head-snatcher, no one knows whether by evening he will still have his head upon his shoulders. At the death of a chief hundreds tremble for their lives, for the prince cannot be buried without human sacrifices. Among animistic peoples every case of sickness and of death leads to the magician's search for the unfortunate being who is supposed to have bewitched the afflicted.<sup>1</sup> What an immense amount of fear is involved in witchcraft, head-snatching, human sacrifice, burial ceremonies, and kindred animistic abominations. Cruelty is everywhere one of the fruits of Animism; from that fruit we can infer the nature of the tree. How sweetly must sound the words peace and rest on the ears of these poor souls in bondage, for in animistic heathendom there is no such thing as security or peace.

To the heathen these demons whom they fear are realities. God has become an abstraction, but they have personal contact with the demons. It is worth noting what Stosch says about the Hindu who denies all reality. "One of the most wonderful things on an earth so full of wonders is, that among a people who, educated and uneducated alike, doubt the reality of all things, no one doubts the reality of evil powers."<sup>2</sup> Questioned about God and divine things, Animists will always admit that they know nothing definite about them, but if asked whether evil spirits really exist, they will unhesitatingly answer yes, surprised that such a strange question should be put. If they were not so firmly convinced of the existence and power of the demons, they would not be so sorely tormented by fear of the spirits. Such fear is not to be trifled with. Battaks who become Christian have no doubt of the reality of the demons. They explain the matter in this way. Heathenism teaches us the power of the spirits.

<sup>1</sup> This is done in Mentawey and in many regions of Africa.

<sup>2</sup> Stosch, "Im fernen Indien," p. 214.

The devil is the personification of the power opposed to God; it was he who deceived our forefathers and persuaded them to idolatry. In worshipping the spirits we were ignorantly worshipping Satan and his servants. The devil, as the personal head of the spirit world that is at enmity with God, became popular among the Battak people in a surprisingly short time. Heathen religion does not know him, but he has been intelligently appropriated, not only by Christians on whom missionaries have forced this "dark illusion," and by heathen who have come into contact with Christianity, but by heathen who are far beyond the horizon of evangelistic mission work. Heathen Christians find in him the explanation of the great blindness of their former state. A Battak teacher, writing on the subject, says: The devil is just what we formerly called begu. He has overreached the Battak nation, and compelled it to obey him, that so he might drag others to ruin with him. The spirit media must in some sort have been the instruments through whom he expressed his wishes. For people who were naturally dull and stupid could, as media, speak clearly and cleverly. It was he who taught the magicians their arts, and enabled them to effect things marvellous and inexplicable. The Niassers who have been converted to Christianity call their heathen religion "the way of the devil,"<sup>1</sup> and the Kols do very much the same.<sup>2</sup> A Battak teacher expresses his opinion of the activity of the magician as follows: "The datu knew how to recover stolen goods, and sometimes how to find the thief. They were able to bring sickness on a man by digging up his footprints. There were magicians who called forth serpents and set them against their enemies. When I think upon their arts I will not venture to say that it was all mere human bungling. There must have been some one who taught them, and that one was the devil."

It is suggestive to find that the judgment of heathen Christians to-day agrees with that of the early Church. Both had experienced the might of heathen religion in their

<sup>1</sup> Sundermann, "Nias," p. 173, 175.

<sup>2</sup> Jellinghaus, "Die Kols," p. 172.

own bodies, and both saw in it the operation of spiritual powers of a Satanic kind. Tertullian, Justin, Tatian, Cyprian are convinced that behind the idols of the heathen the demons are at work, and that these demons are a power in the life of the individual as well as in the life of society. They persuade men to believe in the heathen gods. Tertullian describes their pernicious workings. They destroy men; they bring upon them diseases and convulsions of soul; they ruin the fruits of the field; they lead men to polytheism. Because they are swift in their movements, they are able to foretell many things that will happen, and to send dreams. "Everywhere it is regarded as the chief contrivance of their wickedness that they introduced polytheism, that is, caused themselves to be worshipped under the images of dead idols, and turned to their own advantage the sacrifices whose vapour they relish."<sup>1</sup> Hence idolatry is the supreme sin and the source of all others,<sup>2</sup> a statement which is undoubtedly correct, inasmuch as every intellectual and moral error of the heathen has its basis in religious error. One of the main evidences of the truth and power of Christianity was the casting out of devils in the name of Jesus, which the Christian apologists turned to account as a convincing proof of the truth of their faith.<sup>3</sup> It was believed then, as it is believed in heathendom to-day, that wherever Christians make their appearance the strength of the Satanic powers is broken. We shall speak of this further on. Here it is sufficient to say that the Christians of the first days, like the heathen Christians in the mission fields of to-day, though they knew that they themselves were free from those influences, nay were able to mock and challenge the devil, took a very serious view of idolatry. They knew its sinister power was something real. They did not believe that heathenism could be considered merely a lower stage of the knowledge of God which only needed to be further developed. On the contrary

<sup>1</sup> Harnack, "The Mission and Expansion of Christianity," 2nd ed., vol. i., p. 138, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> Harnack, *l.c.*, p. 292, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> Harnack, *l.c.*, p. 139.

they viewed it as opposition and enmity to God, a bondage to devilish powers endowed with a power of misguidance, lying, and seduction. The testimony of those who have renounced heathenism, and who know its power from experience, deserves, at least, as much attention as the theories of philosophies of religion.

The judgment of heathen Christians, in the old world as in the new, confirms the statements of the Bible about the power of Satan, to whom God has assigned a place in His plan of the world, and granted a certain government of this æon. Jesus calls him the prince of this world.<sup>1</sup> Paul calls him ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου.<sup>2</sup> Dominion over evil spirits is part of the Divine legitimation of the Son. To destroy the works of Satan, viz., the estrangement of man from God, which he has systematically promoted, is the work of the Son of God (1 John iii. 8). The great missionary to the heathen, speaking from his own experience, calls the powers of heathenism that are at work behind the scenes ἀρχαί, ἐξουσίαι, τοὶ κοσμοκράτορες τοῦ σκότους τούτου, πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις (Eph. vi. 12), principalities, powers, the world rulers of this darkness, supernatural powers who systematically organise wickedness and direct it to one end. Paul calls the ruler of heathenism τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ αἵρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργούντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. He inspires the spirit of disobedience towards God, which has become a world power in heathenism.<sup>3</sup> But that does not imply any dualism, for their mysterious power is transmitted to the demons by God. God sends ἐνέργεια πλάνης,<sup>4</sup> which constrains men to believe a lie. Jesus has divested the principalities of their authority, and made an open show of the former rulers (Col. ii. 15). Their dominion could only endure so long as God, in His plan of the world, had determined, viz., till His Son should bring their misleading power to an end. Paul says that the gods whom the heathen worship

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 31 ; xvi. 11 ; cf. Luke iv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 4.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 11.

are nothing; they have no existence, and the heaven which they populate has no existence, οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἴς; οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ.<sup>1</sup> There are λεγόμενοι θεοί in heaven and on earth, which are the gods imagined by heathen fancy. In the minds of their worshippers there are θεοὶ πολλοί and κύριοι πολλοί,<sup>2</sup> but they are realities only to those who believe in them. Paul calls them also οἱ φύσει μὴ ὄντες θεοί,<sup>3</sup> those who by nature are not gods, because products of the human mind. But behind the λεγόμενοι θεοί stand the δαιμόνια,<sup>4</sup> to whom, without knowing it, the heathen offer sacrifice, and not to the εἰδωλα. By their sacrifices to heathen gods, the heathen have essentially the same fellowship with demons as the Christian has with Christ through taking part in the Lord's Supper.<sup>5</sup> The gods of heathen fancy become powerful entities through the demons, who turn idolatry to their own advantage, and under this disguise deceive and enslave the heathen. This estimate of heathenism, which is obvious to all heathen Christians, comes from the greatest heathen missionary of all times, one who indulged in no idle speculations, but found himself compelled to deal with powers whose actual opposition was as sensibly felt as it was mysterious. He saw in heathenism forces opposed to God, a power from beneath. And any mission worker who does not sufficiently appreciate this power in heathenism will underestimate his opponent.

However that may be, whether heathenism is inspired by devilish personalities, or whether we are satisfied with purely human explanations, the enslavement of animistic heathendom under the power of the Satanic is undoubtedly real. To fear and the yoke of spirit worship must be added a third iron fetter, fatalism. Subjection to an immutable fate may seem, to the superficial observèr, to have something consoling for the enslaved, to be a beneficent narcotic. In point of fact it is astonishing how soon the Animist gets over the loss of a member of the family: "It cannot be helped, it was so determined," and with that the matter is ended. But there can

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 4; x. 19.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 5.<sup>3</sup> Gal. iv. 8.<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 20.<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. x. 21.